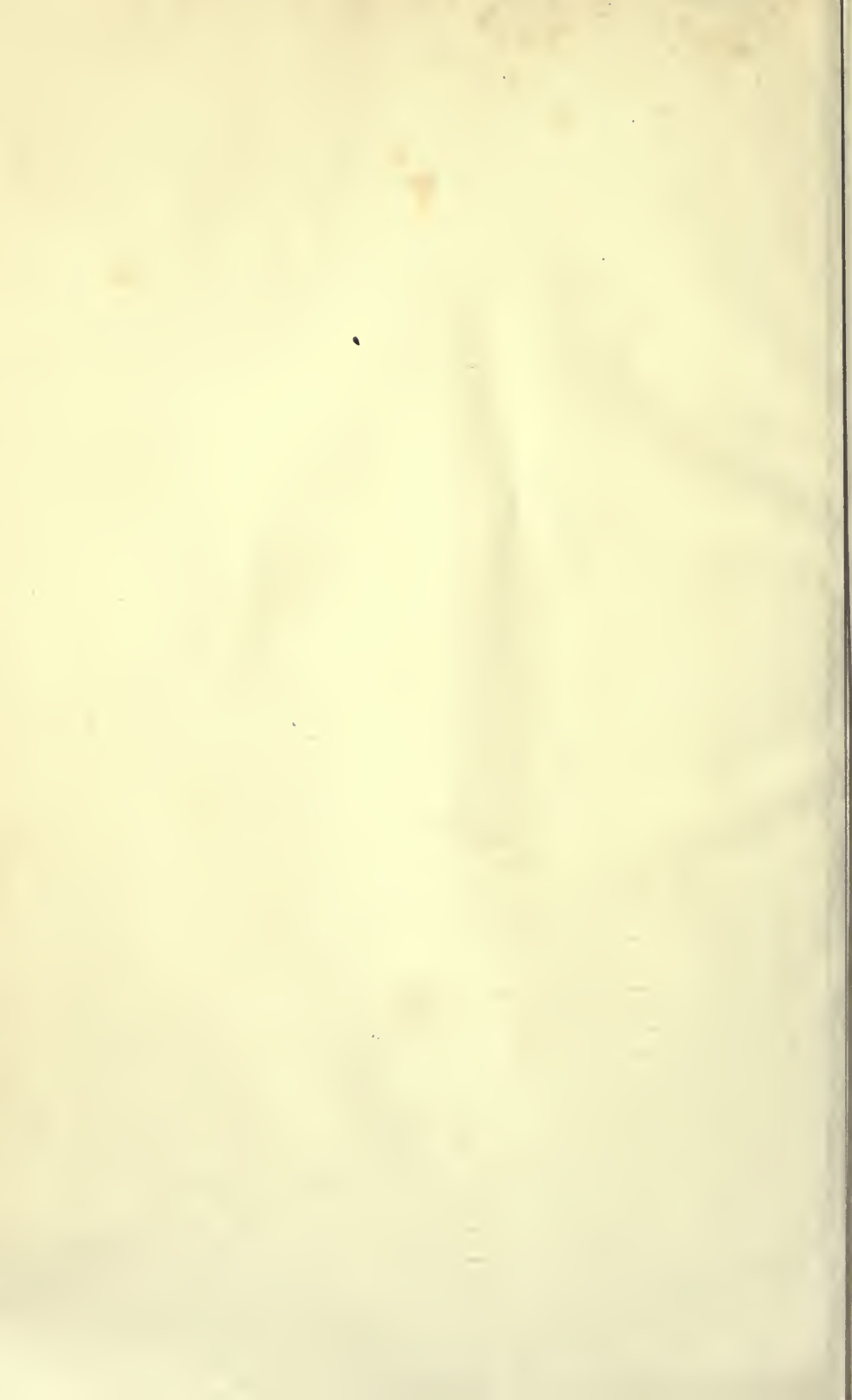




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Duncan Campbell

LITERARY LANDMARKS OF GLASGOW

Fifty copies of this Edition have been printed of

which this is No. 17.

James A. Kilpatrick.



GLASGOW CATHEDRAL.

LITERARY LANDMARKS OF GLASGOW

BY
JAMES A. KILPATRICK

Illustrated by
FORREST NIVEN
AND THE AUTHOR

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AT THE SAINT MUNGO PRESS
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To
ADAM N. ARTHUR
MY OLD SCHOOLMASTER

PROLOGUE

THIS book has been to me, in a very special sense, a labour of love, and came about in a curious way. It sprang, oddly enough, out of a challenge to discover a literary history of Glasgow, and in a weak moment I took up the gauntlet. At first my researches were not inspiring, but as I persevered the subject broadened, and one eminent name after another came into view. I haunted the libraries, finding clues to the missing authors in biographies, reminiscences, dusty records, and still more dusty newspaper files, and the material ultimately increased to such dimensions that I trembled lest, like poor Philoxène Boyer,* who set himself the tremendous task of overtaking everything that had been written about Shakespeare, I might never get beyond the reading. However, the end came when I had read over a thousand books, and sacrificed the leisure of four busy years. The

* See Alphonse Daudet's "Thirty Years of Paris and of My Literary Life."

"documents," more or less complete as data was accessible, were thus at hand, and as for the book—there was now nothing to do but to write it.

As a series of articles these chronicles originally appeared in the *Glasgow Evening News* two years ago, but as now published they have been largely re-written and augmented, foot-notes have been added and authorities quoted which were beyond the scope of a newspaper, and the utmost care has been taken in revising to obtain accuracy, even to the rejection of much that has long passed for history. In the case of the more modern men the recollections of old citizens have not been accepted without verification, while such reminiscences of present-day authors as are given have been acquired, for the most part, at first hand. In the course of a charming letter to me about his young days in Glasgow and those early struggles in London, in which poor David Gray, Charles Gibbon, and William Black shared, Mr. Robert Buchanan wrote * :—

The thought of these old days is very dear to me, and my heart still goes out to the scene of my boyhood and first friendship—the more tenderly as that scene is associated with the memory of my dear father (he died in 1866), and of the beloved mother I lost only a year ago under circumstances of infinite sadness. My mother was the sainted and holy influence of my life,

* October 25, 1895.

and the whole world grew dark the day she left me. She was seventy-eight years old, but I did not realise that she was so near the Great Silence. All my troubles, and I have had many, became as nothing in presence of that crowning sorrow. My soul is in my mother's grave, and I, a worn man, am only a child crying for the breast.

To me there is no more interesting passage in the book than that touching the period to which Mr. Buchanan refers, but Glasgow had then been awake to the pursuit and encouragement of literature for fully two hundred years. Well back in the seventeenth century grants were made by the Magistrates to assist local authors in producing their books, which is not a bad answer to those persons who regard the Scott-created Nicol Jarvie, with his contempt for "stage-plays and poetries," as infallibly typical of the bygone Glasgow bailie. Even Gibbon, the historian, speaks of Glasgow as the "literary and commercial city," and Sir Robert Peel once declared that he "doubted whether, of all cities existing on the face of the earth, there was any one so remarkable for the combination of commercial and active industry with services rendered to science and literature as Glasgow."*

Other authorities might be quoted to the same

* Speech on the occasion of his installation as Lord Rector of the University, January 11, 1837.

effect, but on that point the book will speak for itself. It makes no claim to be an exhaustive treatise, but seeks merely to show that Glasgow is none the less rich in literary associations for her great commercial vigour and industrial enterprise, and that the men of fine literary taste and high intellectual attainments who have acknowledged her as their *alma mater* are not to be reckoned on the fingers of the hand.

Many acknowledgments have to be made to those friends who aided me in my researches, and to the authors and publishers whose books I have laid under contribution. In gathering together the scattered pages of local literary history I have been beset by many difficulties; but if these chronicles prove an effective rejoinder to the common reproach that Glasgow has cut a poor figure in the literature of the country, I shall be well satisfied.

JAMES A. KILPATRICK.

GLASGOW, 1897.

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I.—THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

THE beginnings of literature in Glasgow were amid strife. The roll of the drum at the Cross, the reading of martial proclamations, and the summoning of the citizens to arms were familiar episodes in the days when Glasgow began to discover literary men, to print their books, and, finally, to understand the idea of authorship. The city was then, of course, only a quaint little town on the north bank of the Clyde, very pretty to the eye of the artist, with its Cathedral, Tolbooth, and Tron Church steeples stretching high above some eight or ten streets of picturesque, timber-faced houses of the old Flemish type. The top of Stock-

well Gait was the extreme west-end of the city, and, indeed, the group of houses forming the Glasgow of that day only extended a few hundred yards east and west of the Cross, while the scattered dwellings of the old aristocracy reached up High Street as far as the gentle slopes of the Rottenrow and Drygate. It was in Drygate that Lord Darnley lived when he came to see his father, and here Queen Mary visited him in his sickness. The house stood in a lane called the Limmerfield, the laird of which lands was the person of whom Bailie Nicol Jarvie boasted that his maid Mattie was "a cousin seven times removed."

Taverns in the city were few and ill-appointed, and the very first coffee-house ever opened in Glasgow—at the corner of Trongate and Saltmarket—was, after a time, turned into a book auction-room by the brothers Foulis, the famous University printers. The chief industry in Glasgow was fishing, and the Clyde was then a stream leaping with salmon. The people were rough in manners and rude in dress, and could enjoy a cock-fight as well as a sermon. But Glasgow was an interesting old place in the seventeenth century, and outside the boundaries of the city was the open country, with the long rough roads running through meadows and cornfields, along which rumbled the

one coach that brought Glasgow and Edinburgh into communication.

With a people in this rude and primitive condition it is not to be supposed that literature fared very well. Printing, indeed, was not introduced into Glasgow till 1638, when one George Anderson set up a small establishment on a pension granted to him by the Magistrates, and simultaneously introduced the civilisation of the printer's devil and the proof-sheets of "the Protestation of 1638, No. 837." Zachary Boyd's "Catechisms," however, was the first *book* ever printed in Glasgow (1639), so that the literature of the city may be dated from the time of the old Barony minister. An interesting figure he was in the High Street in these days, moving about among a set of severe church folk who took off their bonnets to him reverently, for he was a power in the pulpit of the Laigh Kirk. His sermons read well in print, but, it must be confessed, he was an indifferent poet, though Nicol Jarvie recommended his verses to the attention of Francis Osbaldistone, remarking that "better poetry need



ZACHARY BOYD.

4 *Literary Landmarks of Glasgow.*

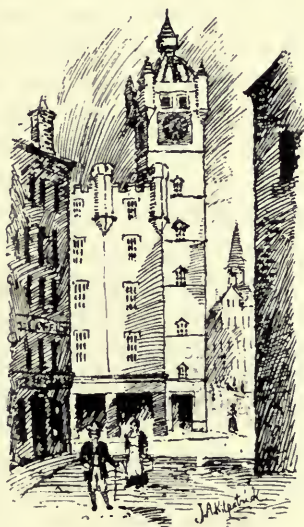
nane to be, as he had been tell'd by them that ken'd, or suld ha'e ken'd, about sic things." When Cromwell and his Ironsides marched into the town in 1650 it was old Zachary Boyd (then threescore years and five) who most vehemently denounced the Protector from the pulpit in the crypt of the Cathedral, and nearly got his brains blown out for his honesty by one of Cromwell's officers. The Protector, however, had rather the better of old Zachary, for he afterwards summoned the refractory Glasgow clergy to meet him at his quarters in Silvercraig's Land, Saltmarket, and inflicted upon them a prayer lasting some three hours!

In the early stages of printing in Glasgow the press was devoted to the publication of religious works, and it does not appear that the workmanship was good, for as late as 1713 University people were obliged to go to Edinburgh in order "to gett one sheet right printed."* The *littérateurs* of St. Mungo were in these days limited to the clergy. Such divines and ecclesiastical historians as Robert Wodrow, William Dunlop, and William Craig were then young men at college. Even the poets, such as they were, cultivated a rather melancholy muse.

* From a paper entitled "Proposals for erecting a Bookseller's shop and a printing press within the University of Glasgow," presented to the Faculty in 1713.

Young James Arbuckle, who might have written some clever verse, died leaving unfinished a laboured translation of Virgil.

Literary taste, however, in a very modest way, was improving, for from 1661 to 1736 there are various references in the Town Council minutes to small grants for the encouragement of authors. Broad-sides had, of course, been the only printed source of news, but in 1715 the enterprise of the trade became so ambitious that a newspaper—and a penny newspaper, too—was started. The *Courant* (afterwards called the *West Country Intelligence*) was issued



OLD GLASGOW CROSS.

three times a week, and was a 12-page small 4to journal, copies of which could be had by "any gentleman or minister, or any other who wants

6 *Literary Landmarks of Glasgow.*

them," at the College Printing-house or the Post-Office. Gentlemen in all quarters, especially seaport towns, were desired "to send by post any news they had." The *Intelligence*, however, soon failed, and for a quarter of a century newspaper enterprise in Glasgow was dead. Several printers, nevertheless, had set up in business, a University printer had been appointed, and ultimately (1718) James Duncan took a shop in Saltmarket and established himself as a typefounder. His types were rude in workmanship, it is true, but he was an enterprising fellow, and was the printer of M'Ure's "History of Glasgow," the first historic record of the city's rise and progress.

About this time one or two pamphleteers made their way into Scotland, and among these the chief was the redoubtable Daniel Defoe, who might very properly be described as the father of English fiction. In Glasgow he met many of the best people of the time, and no doubt impressed the gentlefolk of the Saltmarket and Gallowgate, though this "middle-sized, spare man with a hooked nose, sharp chin, and little grey eyes" hardly looked the sort of person who was going to captivate the young of all time with such a book as "Robinson Crusoe." Of Glasgow Defoe had many pleasant things to say, and he describes the city as "one of

the cleanest, most beautiful, and best built in Great Britain." It is curious, indeed, to read some of the fantastic word-pictures these old writers drew of Glasgow. Even Cromwell himself has left it on record that Glasgow was "a much sweeter and more delightful place than Edinburgh, and would make a gallant headquarters."

With Defoe's visit and the publication of his "Tour in Scotland" (with which Samuel Richardson was afterwards concerned) the literary landmarks of Glasgow become more in-

teresting. James Moor, afterwards Greek professor, was about this time a student at the University. A genial and hearty fellow, he had a pretty wit for amusing his friends by sallies into polite verse, but it is told as characteristic of his earnestness and diligence in study that "being too poor [as a boy] to buy Newton's



Samuel Defoe

'Principia,' he copied the whole book with his own hand." This is the same scholar who, along with Professor Muirhead, afterwards edited Foulis's perfect edition of Homer. Among the youths at the

University in Moor's own student days was one Samuel Boyse, a roystering fellow, whose father, a Dublin clergyman, thought to make a minister of him. Sam, however, evidently found theology a dull sort of business, for he chose another kind of divinity, and bestowed his attentions upon a certain Miss Atchenson, the comely daughter of a Glasgow tradesman. The folly of looking into a pretty girl's eyes while at college has often been demonstrated, and this early example is very interesting. Samuel neglected his studies. He tossed his text-books into a corner, and took his texts from Miss Atchenson's eyes. He wrote rapturous poems about her charms, for he had the witchery of versification which afterwards led him to whisper sweet nothings even to Duchesses. So well, indeed, did his love-making in Glasgow thrive that a year after he had first set eyes upon the lady he went so far as to marry her. He then returned to his father, taking his wife and her sister with him. The kind old man supported them for a time out of his scanty living, but eventually Sam abandoned himself to dissipation, in which he was to some extent encouraged by his wife, who, it is said, bestowed her favours on other men in a shameless manner. Boyse afterwards went to London with an introduction to Pope, but he took no advantage of his opportunities. He died in

great poverty in 1749, and had to be buried at the expense of the parish.*

While Moor was making the best of his time at college with Homer, and the amorous Boyse was pursuing his own sweet fantasies after the manner of Ovid, the brothers Foulis, unable to afford the luxury of University training, were exerting themselves to better things amid very humble surroundings. Robert was earning his livelihood as a barber's apprentice, and steadily cultivating a taste for art and letters between each particular shave, just as Allan Ramsay, some ten or twelve years before, in the capacity of wig-maker, had scribbled "’atween times" snatches of lyric verse, laying the foundation of "The Gentle Shepherd." Not till Professor Hutcheson came across the



ROBERT FOULIS.

* Dr. Johnson tells how he had once collected in sixpences, "at a time when, to me, sixpence was a consideration," a sum to redeem Boyse's clothes from pawn, and two days afterwards the clothes were pawned again! His chief poem was "The Deity," written by him while living in a destitute state in a miserable lodging in Shoe Lane, and it was praised both by Pope and Fielding.

bright and diligent lad did Robert Foulis receive any encouragement to give up the razor and go in for bookselling and printing, the worthy Professor of Moral Philosophy himself meanwhile assisting the lads to study at the University.

About this time there was a student and apothecary's assistant in Glasgow who was to make a name for himself in the world of letters. Tobias George Smollett was engaged with the pestle and mortar in the curious old shop of Dr. Gordon in Gibson's Land, at the corner of Saltmarket and Prince's Street. Here it was that Toby met Potion, Crab, Squire Gawky, and indeed most of the characters in "Roderick Random," and picked up a little Latin from the labels of the apothecary's bottles. In Glasgow, too, where Smollett lodged for some four years (1735-39), he must have met Adam Smith, for in 1737, at the age of fourteen, Smith was sent to Glasgow University; and surely the absent-minded boy from Kirkcaldy, smiling and talking aloud to himself in the midst of his fellow-students, could not fail to attract the attention of so keen an observer as young Toby. For four years Smith remained at Glasgow University, but in 1741, having obtained a "Snell" exhibition, he was enabled to transfer his studies to Balliol College, Oxford. Even at this time, however, Adam was a figure in the select literary circle of Glasgow. He was

an early and distinguished member of the Literary Society, in which coterie were also Edmund Burke, David Hume, Adam Ferguson, the brothers Foulis, Drs. Hutcheson, Reid, Black, Moor, and others. The society first met in the public library and afterwards in the Prince of Wales Tavern, the Black Bull, &c.

It was evidently not till some years later—in London, just after the news of Culloden—that Smollett made the acquaintance of Dr. Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk, whose “Autobiography” is one of the most delightful books of reminiscence in the language. Yet it was only a year or so after Smollett left for London, with his MS. tragedy in his pocket, that “Jupiter” Carlyle came to study at Glasgow University. He had a lodging in the College Building, which, he says, “I furnished at a moderate rent. John Donaldson, a college-servant, lighted my fire and made my bed; and a maid from the landlady who furnished the room came once a fortnight with clean linens.” What days young Carlyle had at the University! His father was an old friend of Mr. Dick, the Professor of Natural Philosophy, and it was to see him that father and son rode over from Edinburgh in 1742, the year before “Jupiter” matriculated in Glasgow.

Carlyle’s autobiography is so full of his young revels that one smiles at the frankness of his confessions. He was scarce a week in Glasgow before he

knew all the best families in the city, had joined a dancing class, and captivated the young ladies at college; and he soon found himself getting up theatricals, a member of various social and literary clubs, and quite a figure at Mrs. Leechman's tea parties, where he kept the Professor's good lady entertained for hours by his smart conversation on "plays, novels, poetry, and the fashions." What spirits the old minister of Inveresk must have maintained even to the last! His wonderful autobiography, with its lively pictures of student life and boundless good-humour, was not even begun till "Jupiter" was in his seventy-ninth year.

In 1741 Andrew Stalker edited and published the first copy of the *Glasgow Journal*, the Literary Society was flourishing, and the brothers Foulis had established themselves in the printing and bookselling trade. Two years later they were appointed printers to the University, and ere long they had achieved a world-wide reputation for their beautiful editions of the Iliad, the Odyssey, and other classics. This was a stirring time for the press had the editor of the *Journal* known his business, but during the '45 Rebellion Mr. Stalker failed grievously in his duty. Indeed, he abandoned his post with the excuse that he "could not safely publish so as to please the generality of his readers." Just imagine the impa-

tience of the New Journalists with such a man! Here was an editor with Bonnie Prince Charlie and his rebel forces spending Christmas in the town, a ball given by his chiefs, a review on the Green, and, finally, a Glasgow damsel (Miss Walkinshaw) lending herself to the Pretender's embraces, without so much as a dozen lines about the whole affair or a solitary pica heading. What a chapter that might have made!



II.—SMOLLETT'S BACK ATTIC.

TWO curious little shops in Gibson's Land, at the north corner of Saltmarket and Prince's Street, used to be pointed out as the apothecary stores made famous in Smollett's "Adventures of Roderick Random." They were darkened by the upper flat of the building, which projected out to the roadway and was supported on some eighteen pillars forming a sort of piazza. One of these shops belonged to Dr. John Gordon, a surgeon of extensive practice, with whom Smollett served his medical apprenticeship; the other was tenanted by Dr. Crawford, a rival apothecary, and stood at the corner of the block.

Both of these men are caricatured in "Roderick Random," which is largely autobiographical; and

though some superior persons have set themselves to dispute one or two of the portraits, there is no escaping the fact that Smollett delighted in writing his friends—and, not infrequently, his enemies—into his books. At school and college he lampooned his companions; many of the characters in “Roderick Random” were beyond doubt Glasgow men; in “Peregrine Pickle” Garrick and Quin were satirised for their want of appreciation for his tragedy “The Regicide,” a youthful indiscretion which Smollett had perpetrated in his leisure from dispensing physic and plaisters in the Glasgow apothecary’s; while in “Humphry Clinker” he expressly mentions his friend Dr. John Moore, introduces Matthew Bramble to Provost Cochrane, Dr. Gordon, and Glassford, and refers to his acquaintance with Hume, Adam Smith, Ferguson, Home, Blair, Dr. Carlyle, and other literary men in Edinburgh.

When Smollett came to Glasgow first of all as a boy of about fourteen (1735), Dr. Gordon, it seems, was



DR. GORDON'S SHOP.

rather disposed in his favour, but his description of him as "my ane bubbly-nosed callant, wi' the stane in his pouch," is rather a clumsy compliment, even when Sir Walter Scott, who learned the description second-hand, has translated it into appreciative English. A mischievous boy he certainly was, but he must have



TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

been rather comely to look at, for he was in considerable favour with the Glasgow ladies—"an intoxicating piece of good fortune," he remarks in "*Roderick Random*," "to one of my amorous complexion." He got into trouble, however, between his "amorous complexion" and his satirical verses, for, if the hero of his novel be trusted, some particulars of his small amours

were betrayed and "published with such exaggerations that I suffered very much in the opinion of everybody, and was utterly discarded by the dear creatures whose names had been called in question."

During his stay in Glasgow Smollett enjoyed the humble comforts of a little back attic, at a weekly rent of something like 1s. 6d., and he was once so reduced in circumstances as to sell his gold-laced

hat for half-price to his landlord. It was during this period of his misfortunes—for Smollett was no more intended for an apothecary than for a gravedigger—that he wrote his tragedy, “The Regicide.”

Many young men of seventeen or eighteen, both before and since Smollett's time, have no doubt written tragedies in blank verse, but it requires a youth of spirit and resource to attempt such a task in all earnestness. Thomas Campbell relates that the tradition in Glasgow during his young days was that Smollett was “a restive apprentice,” and it is not hard to believe that the ambitious boy was ill at ease behind the counter of the Saltmarket drug-shop. So, in the fire of his young ambition, Smollett conceived “The Regicide,” and doubtless, as in his little back attic he wrote up the scenes which culminated in the murder of the Scottish King (James I.), he many a time pictured the whole bloody business on the stage of Drury Lane, with Garrick as the central figure, and an immense audience thrilled by the fervour of the lines.

While writing this great tragedy, however, Smollett was not so absorbed as to miss the comedy or farce of everyday life as it passed in and about the Saltmarket. Consciously or unconsciously, the people among whom he mixed were forming themselves into the *dramatis personæ* of “Roderick Random.” Dr. Gordon very speedily became Mr. Potion, and in turn

Mr. Launcelot Crab assumed the character of Dr. Crawford, a little fat man, it is said, with grey eyes and precisely the "powder-horn nose" described by Smollett. Provost Buchanan, then a young man, figured as Squire Gawky, and for a time a Dumbarton barber and a Glasgow Bailie (Mr. Niven) were competitors for the honour of being Strap. A writer in the first number of the Glasgow *Emmet* (5th April, 1823), however, satisfactorily disposed of the dispute in Bailie Niven's favour, the worthy magistrate being himself a wigmaker and knight of the razor. Captain Whiffle, the daintily-dressed, sweetly perfumed, and generally dandified commander of the man-of-war "Thunder," was supposed to be a fantastic picture of the Earl of Bath, and, indeed, his Lordship even went so far as to prosecute Smollett for libel, but the novelist escaped all legal consequences by reason, it is said, of his adroit description of the officer—"Captain Whiffle (for *that* was his name)." Narcissa in "Roderick Random" is generally accepted as a portrait of Smollett's own wife.

It is difficult, of course, to separate the fact from the fiction in Smollett's novels. No doubt "Roderick Random" is less an autobiography of Smollett than "David Copperfield" is the story of Dickens's life; yet both are probably romantic accounts of what the authors believed they had suffered, rather than precise

narratives of their misfortunes. Strap and Squire Gawky—that is to say, Niven and Buchanan—seem to have been Smollett's companions in Glasgow; and though he must have come in contact with Adam Smith, then a student at the University, where Smollett himself appears to have attended at least the Latin and Greek classes, no mention is made of the acquaintanceship at that period.

Roderick Random's introduction to Mr. Crab seems like a piece of genuine biography, but at anyrate the passage is worth quoting as a specimen of the dialogue of the old novelists and a description of the manners of the time. Roderick had been abandoned by Mr. Potion, and the hypocritical Crab, in order to show his superiority to his rival, invited the lad to call on him. He discovered Crab "engaged with two more in drinking a liquor called *pop-in*" in a little public-house round the corner from Gibson's Land. On Roderick's entrance they discussed Potion in a manner nowise to that apothecary's credit as a gentleman, and then Smollett relates ("Roderick Random," chapter vii.):—

After this preamble Crab addressed himself to me in these words:—"Well my lad, I have heard a good character of you, and I'll do for you. You may send your things to my house when you please. I have given orders for your reception. Z—ds! What does the booby stare

at? If you have no mind to embrace my courteous offer, you may let it alone and be d——n'd."

I answered with a submissive bow that I was far from rejecting his friendly offer, which I would immediately accept, as soon as he should inform me on what footing I was to be entertained.

"What footing! d——n my blood," cried he, "d'ye expect a footman and a couple of horses kept for you?"

"No, sir," I replied, "my expectations are not quite so sanguine. That I may be as little burthensome as possible, I would willingly serve in your shop, by which means I will save you the expense of a journeyman or porter at least, for I understand a little pharmacy, having employed some of my leisure hours in the practice of that art while I lived with Mr. Potion; neither am I altogether ignorant of surgery, which I have studied with great pleasure and application."

"O ho! you did?" says Crab. "Gentlemen, here is a complete artist. Studied surgery? What! in books, I suppose. I shall have you disputing with me one of those days on points of my profession. You can already account for muscular motion, I warrant, and explain the mystery of the brain and the nerves. Ha!—You are too learned for me, d——n me. But let's hear no more of this stuff: Can you bleed and give a clyster, spread a plaister, and prepare a potion?"

Upon my answering in the affirmative he shook his head, telling me he believed he should have little good of me for all my promises, but, however, he would take me in for the sake of charity.

It was about this same Crab that one of the few good stories of Smollett is told. It has appeared in

various versions, more or less alike, but all agreeing as to Smollett's clever repartee. Dr. Moore of Glasgow, the novelist's old friend and biographer, may be considered to come nearest the truth:—

On a winter evening when the streets were covered with snow Smollett happened to be engaged in a snowball fight with a few boys of his own age. Among his associates was the apprentice of that surgeon who was supposed to have been delineated under the name of Crab in "Roderick Random." He entered his shop while his apprentice was in the heat of the engagement. On the return of the latter the master remonstrated severely with him for his negligence in quitting the shop. The youth excused himself by saying that while he was employed in making up a prescription a fellow had hit him with a snowball, and that he had been in pursuit of the delinquent.

"A mighty probable story, truly," said the master, in an ironical tone. "I wonder how long I should stand here before it would enter into any mortal's head to throw a snowball at me?"

While he was holding his head erect with a scornful air he received a severe blow on the face by a snowball. Smollett, who stood concealed behind the pillar at the shop door, had heard the dialogue, and perceiving that his companion was puzzled for an answer, he extricated him by a repartee equally smart and *à propos*.

Another teller of the story says that "Crab, who, with all his irascibility, was a man of humour, was so pleased with the wit and courage of the lad that he forgave him on the spot."

22 *Literary Landmarks of Glasgow.*

In his young Glasgow days Smollett was fond of polite literature as well as Latin and Greek. "I valued myself," he says, "on my taste for *belles lettres* and a talent for poetry." We can well picture him in his garret poring over the delightful pages of "Don Quixote" and "Gil Blas," two books by which he was largely influenced in the writing of his own "Roderick Random." M. Motteux's translation of Cervantes' story is probably that which Smollett first read and lingered over most lovingly, for his own rendering of "Don Quixote" is largely adapted from the clever Frenchman's version. Smollett's literature, however, was at this time of a somewhat diverse character, and side by side with Le Sage and Cervantes on his bookshelf might have been found a small edition of Horace, a Greek text-book, Wiseman's "Surgery," and a history of Scotland.

Literature was not in a very advanced state locally in Smollett's time. The youth had been about a year in the apothecary business before the first Glasgow History—M'Ure's—made its appearance (1736), but it was a beautiful Glasgow he lived in, surrounded by corn fields, flower gardens, and orchards. It seems also to have been a very gay sort of place, for Squire Gawky, he tells us, spent most of his time dancing, fencing, and playing billiards. In Glasgow Smollett formed a lengthened and happy friendship

with Dr. Moore, who lived in Donald's Land, Trongate. Here the doctor's son John—afterwards Sir John Moore, the hero of Corunna—was born. Dr. Moore was one of the notable citizens of his time, a tolerable verse-maker, author of a novel called "Zeluco," founder of the Hodge-Podge Club, and Smollett's own editor and biographer. Besides, he had himself been an apprentice with Dr. Gordon before he set up as a surgeon in the Trongate, and married the winsome daughter of Rev. Professor Simson.

Having no pronounced liking for mixing medicines, Smollett had long found his surroundings and prospects in Glasgow irksome, so at the age of eighteen, after four years of Latin prescriptions, plaisters, and the like, he put his tragedy into his pocket, and took the high road to London. What has that journey not meant to many a young Scotsman since Smollett's day? What struggles and hardships, what triumphs and failures? In spite of Smollett's introduction to Lyttleton, and that literary patron's mention of "The Regicide" to Garrick, it was never acted. No manager would take it. Garrick and Quin saw nothing but boyish enthusiasm in the piece, and indeed, though it had some merit, it was not an *acting* tragedy at all, nearly all the killing being done behind the scenes, and made known to the audience,

according to one of Smollett's own stage directions, by "a noise of slashing swords and shrieks." Ultimately (in 1749) it was published, and in a preface Smollett's satire was let loose on all those who had failed to appreciate his play. Afterwards, however, he gained a considerable footing in London, and on the production of his farce "The Reprisal; or, the Tars of Old England," Garrick was forgiven everything.

Still, it was a hard time for Smollett in London, and the movements of Prince Charlie in the North, together with the recollection of a certain visit of the Highlanders to Derby, had not predisposed Londoners in the Scotsman's favour. Nevertheless it was during the stirring times of '45 that a group of literary Scotsmen met regularly in a tavern in Cockspur Street, and joined in a modest supper and a glass of punch, in keeping with their slender resources. This group included Smollett, "Jupiter" Carlyle, Blair, and Smith, and, indeed, it was at one of these gatherings that Smollett first met his fellow-student and countryman, Carlyle. It was likewise one of these convivial meetings that was rudely disturbed by the news of the battle of Culloden. Smollett was greatly moved by the event, and the riotous joy of the Londoners offended him. So he went home moodily to his lodging and gave vent to his indigna-

tion in verse. His poem "The Tears of Scotland" was read to Smith and Carlyle sometime later at their little meeting-place, and, notwithstanding the vehemence of the lines, it obtained a large circulation on being published, and had the effect, Dr. Carlyle declared, of ultimately bringing Englishmen round to Smollett's own views of the cruelties perpetrated on "hapless Caledonia."

In 1755, shortly after the appearance of his translation of "Don Quixote," Smollett visited Glasgow, and rejoined his old friends Dr. Moore, Professor Richardson (who published the "Ode to Independence," Smollett's only posthumous work), and others,



"JUPITER" CARLYLE.

with a name made famous after his struggle in big, cruel London. In November, 1765, he wrote to Dr. Moore from Bath, where he was wintering during his illness, a letter in which he despaired of ever seeing him again. The following year, however, he paid his last visit to Scotland, and then, with ruined health, he left for Italy. In "Humphry Clinker," the last work from his pen, he banished for ever the old satire which had made for him so many enemies. His

humour was kindlier, and there was even a tone of sadness in some of the chapters. He reverted again to the scenes of his young days, and spoke with great kindness of all his old friends in Glasgow. It was a fitting close to his adventurous life, and it was at Leghorn, where he died in 1771, that he wrote the concluding chapters. One of his last letters was to his old friend, the famous John Hunter, brother of Dr. William Hunter, the donor of the Hunterian Museum to the University.

There is no nameplate in Glasgow to mark Smollett's connection with the city; Vale of Leven alone boasts a memorial. The Latin inscription on the base of the Tuscan column at Renton may be "miserably bad," as Coleridge said when, along with Wordsworth and his sister, he visited the spot in 1803; but it was at least the loving composition of Dr. Samuel Johnson and other scholars of whom poor Smollett would not have been ashamed. At anyrate the monument recalls the memory of one of the old novelists, who was also one of the old humorists. His friend Dr. Carlyle regarded him as superior to Fielding "in the true comic vein," and Sir Walter Scott has declared that, in spite of his coarseness, "perhaps no books ever written have excited such peals of inextinguishable laughter as those of Smollett."



III.—AT THE SIGN OF THE SARACEN'S HEAD.

NOT till the middle of last century was there a really commodious hostelry in Glasgow where a visitor might put up comfortably for the night, and enjoy the delights of respectable conviviality. Hitherto there had been plenty of taverns where scant accommodation and fairly good punch were provided, but these were largely at the command of the literary coteries of the time, and the best parlour in each was turned into a club-room for such societies. In 1755, however, the Saracen's Head Inn was put up in the Gallowgate, and at once became the fashionable hostelry of Glasgow. After-

wards the Black Bull, the Buck's Head, and many more sprang up, and literary club-men becoming more respectable migrated to these better-appointed establishments. In this manner the famous Literary and Commercial Society (of which Adam Smith, David Hume, Edmund Burke, the Brothers Foulis, and most of the professors were members) took up its quarters in the Black Bull, Argyle Street, the favourite resort of Burns; while the Anderston Club, which had the advantage of sharing the distinguished membership of the "Literary," met in fine conviviality in Sharpe's jovial hostelry in the (then) village of Anderston. The Gaelic Club likewise came to meet in the Black Bull; the Shakespeare, Saltmarket (Mrs. Kerr's), became the meeting-place of a curious "Paul-Pry" Society known as the Sma' Weft Club; and Mrs. Anderson's Sun Tavern in the Saltmarket was for long frequented by William Motherwell and the literary spirits of his time.

In spite of these reminiscences of other taverns, a very peculiar interest attaches to the Saracen's Head. There can scarce be any question that it was here, in 1764, that Thomas Gray, the author of "The Elegy," first met the brothers Foulis, to whom he was introduced by Dr. Beattie, the old poet-philosopher of Aberdeen, who was most anxious that "his country should afford some testimony of its regard for the

merit of the poet." Beattie and Gray were old friends, and the Foulises were eager to obtain the printing of an edition of the latter's work. So over the hospitable board of the Saracen's Head the Scottish Elzevirs no doubt discussed the project with the poet. An interesting figure he was beside the Glasgow printers—his little close-shaven face, aquiline nose, and pink cheeks peeping out from the mass of curls which composed his flaxen wig and fell upon his brown coat and white cravat.* How his strange piercing eyes searched Robert Foulis through and through!

Quiet and uncommunicative as a rule, Gray could yet become witty and even convivial on occasion, but the visit to Glasgow seemed rather a formal affair. The high standard of scholarship which the Foulis brothers sought in the works they published would appear, however, to have provoked Gray's admiration of the men, and won him over to their project unreservedly. The result of the interview was the publication by Foulis of a beautiful edition of Gray's poems, including "The Elegy," "The Eton Ode," "Poesy," &c., at the same time as Dodsley issued an edition in London.

Foulis's printing of the poems was an excellent

* According to the portrait by Benjamin Wilson, artist, philosopher, and electrician (1721-88),

specimen of typography, and Gray himself was delighted with it. "It is indeed a beautiful edition," he wrote, "and must certainly do credit both to him and to me"; and again he says Dodsley's editions are "far inferior to that of Glasgow." The Glasgow edition, a quarto of some 64 pages, was sold very rapidly, and finding himself a considerable gainer, Mr. Foulis presented Gray with an elegant copy of his Homer, one of the best pieces of printing to be seen at that time. The poet was much impressed by the generous conduct of the brothers Foulis, and his letters to Dr. Beattie are full of acknowledgments of their kindness. Gray was also fortunate in his friendship with Beattie, who was a man, says Cowper, "so gentle, so well tempered, so happy in his religion, and so humane in his philosophy that it is necessary to love him if one has any sense of what is lovely."

It was at the Saracen's Head, too, that Dr. Samuel Johnson and Boswell put up on their return from the Hebrides, in October, 1773. From Inveraray they rode on horseback to Rosedow, on the banks of Loch Lomond, the seat of Sir James Colquhoun, the portly old lexicographer being mounted on a fine animal lent to him by the Duke of Argyll. Thence they reached Mr. James Smollet's place at Cameron, and in high spirits, according to Boswell, drove to

Glasgow in a post-chaise ordered from the city. Arrived at the Saracen's Head the Doctor was in great form, for not a single line having reached him from London since he left Aberdeen, he was delighted to find quite a respectable budget of letters awaiting him at the Glasgow hostelry. These he read with great relish ; then, giving himself up to the comforts of the Gallowgate, he drew in his arm-chair to the fire, put his feet upon the grate, and, contemplating the warm glow from the hearth, said to Boswell, with mock solemnity, "Here am I, an Englishman, sitting by a coal fire!"

A sketch in the National Illustrated Library edition of Boswell's "Tour to the Hebrides" represents Johnson very much at home in the cosy parlour with his chair swung on its two back legs and his own feet stretched up on the grate and fender. The sketch is a pretty faithful one of the great man, and his brown suit with the metal buttons, his loose coat sleeves without the elegance of ruffles, his iron grey



DR. JOHNSON.

wig, and the silver buckles (which adorned his shoes as he grew older), are well set down in the picture. Boswell with his arm resting on the mantelpiece is represented gazing abstractedly into the fire, while the waiter at the Saracen's Head is clumsily setting the supper. So far as the picture goes there are no tea-cups on the table, and one wonders what will happen to the attendant should he forget to set them down. Dr. Johnson was an incorrigible tea-drinker, and on one occasion—at Cumberland's—drank no fewer than twelve cups. Both at Johnson's Court (Fleet Street) and at Bolt Court "the kettle had scarcely time to cool," for Johnson drank tea at all times, and with it, he tells us, "amused the evening, solaced the midnight, and welcomed the morning."

After a good night's rest in the best bedroom of the Saracen's Head, the Doctor was early astir to receive the local University celebrities—Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Reid, and Mr. Anderson—whom he had invited to breakfast. You may be sure that Johnson played the autocrat of the breakfast-table, but he was in capital humour, and gladly accepted Professor Anderson's offer to conduct Boswell and himself over the city. It was a lovely morning, and probably Glasgow had never looked better. Johnson was delighted with everything he saw, and spoke with admiration of the buildings. This gave Boswell an

opportunity of setting Glasgow right with the Doctor, so, recalling the rebuke* with which Johnson once terminated Adam Smith's eulogies of the city, Boswell whispered to Johnson, very likely in view of the fine old Cathedral, "Don't you feel some remorse?" This seems to have been the only occasion on record upon which the autocrat of Fleet Street did not reply.

At the Old College the distinguished strangers were received with great respect by the professors and entertained by Professor Leechman at his own house. To the Saracen's Head, however, they returned for dinner, and were accompanied by the brothers Foulis and Professors Reid and Anderson, who "dined and took tea with us." Then the professors went away, and while Boswell attended to some correspondence the two Glasgow Elzevirs appear to have interviewed the Doctor very thoroughly.



JAMES BOSWELL.

"Instead of listening to the dictates of the Sage,"

* One day in London when Adam Smith was boasting of Glasgow, Johnson turned to him with a withering look and said, "Pray, sir, have you ever seen Brentford?"

says Boswell, "they had teased him with questions and doubtful disputations," so much so, indeed, that Johnson sought Boswell, "in a flutter," and begged him to come back as he "could not bear these men."

"O ho! sir," said Boswell, who was himself the greatest of interviewers and the first (if we except that other doughty Scotsman, Drummond of Hawthornden), "you are flying to me for refuge?"

"Sir," said Johnson testily, "it is of two evils choosing the least."

According to Boswell the brothers Foulis, although good and ingenious men, had an unsettled speculative mode of conversation which was offensive.

Johnson did not talk much in Glasgow, it seems, and one would imagine that, with the exception of the Foulis brothers, the literati of St. Mungo were awed by the presence of the oracle from Fleet Street. Still the visit, on the whole, was a success, and on October 30th Boswell and his companion left for the Ayrshire house of the Earl of Loudon, the diligence then running daily from the Saracen's Head.

Adam Smith and Edmund Burke must have been in this same hostelry many a time, for the Saracen's Head was famous for its claret and its punch, and was in great favour with the professors. The gigantic punch-bowl of the establishment was known far and

wide, for it had a capacity of several gallons, and bore the device of the City Arms inside the bowl with the motto, "Success to the town of Glasgow." "Jupiter" Carlyle—afterwards the minister of Inveresk, and even moderator of the Synod—was a member of two Glasgow clubs with which Adam Smith, the amiable and cultured Provost Cochrane, and others were connected. One of these met weekly in Mr. Dugald's tavern, near the Cross, where, Carlyle says, "we drank a little punch after our beefsteaks and pancakes, and the expense never exceeded 1s. 6d., seldom 1s." This was during Carlyle's college days in 1743, when he fell in love with Mally Campbell, the Principal's daughter, who was "not only more beautiful than any woman there, but more sensible and friendly than all the professors put together." Doubtless when "Jupiter" returned to Glasgow afterwards—in August, 1766 (when, on a visit along with Dr. Robertson to Lord Glasgow, he spent two nights with his college friends), and again in January, 1768—he found the Saracen's Head an improvement on Mr. Dugald's tavern or the Cockaine, where with rack punch in the convivial society of Colonel Hepburn he got "the first headache I almost ever felt."

The Saracen's Head was the "decent hostelry" to which Wordsworth was recommended by the ostler

at Hamilton when the poet with his sister Dorothy and Coleridge were on their tour in Scotland in 1803. Wearied out by the drive up to Glasgow, and annoyed by roads full of people, who all noticed the poet's conveyance in one way or another, the children even

"hooting after us," Dorothy Wordsworth writes in her "Memorials," under date August 22nd:—



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

"I shall never forget how glad I was to be landed in a quiet little back parlour [in the Saracen's Head Inn], for my head was beating with the noise of carts which we had left, and the wearisomeness of the disagreeable objects near the highway; but with my first pleasant sensations also came

the feeling that we were not in an English inn—partly from its half-unfurnished appearance, which is common in Scotland, for in general the deal wainscots and doors are unpainted, and partly from the dirtiness of the floors. Having dined, William and I walked to the Post Office, and after much seeking found out a quiet timber-yard wherein to sit down and read our letters. . . . We returned to the inn before dark. I had a bad headache and was tired, and we all went to bed soon."

It does not appear that Wordsworth and his companions enjoyed Glasgow very much. It rained

nearly all the time, and, according to Dorothy, they only noticed busy streets, * fine buildings, and "the largest coffee-room I ever saw" [evidently the Tontine], as against a want of cleanliness and a dulness of dress and general exterior. The surroundings of the city they found delightful. "I never saw anything like the Falls of Clyde," she writes. "It would be a delicious spot to have near one's own house."

On leaving Glasgow it is pleasant to learn that the party were quite cheerful, and were accompanied by a band of happy children, to please whom Wordsworth, his sister, and Coleridge got out of their car and let the youngsters in for a ride. "I would have walked two miles willingly," Miss Wordsworth says, "to have had the pleasure of seeing them so happy." The departure from the Saracen's Head, however, is thus chronicled: "Dined and left Glasgow at about three o'clock *in a heavy rain.*"

Again in 1833 Wordsworth visited Scotland, passing through Glasgow, and during this tour he wrote, or at least found material for, thirty or forty sonnets. Wordsworth was very truly a child of nature. He nearly always scribbled his poems out-of-doors, and his study was but a receptacle for his books. "Ninety-tenths of my verses," he has told us, "were murmured

* Miss Wordsworth remarks on the picturesqueness of the Trongate, but it rained so heavily that they never so much as saw the Cathedral.

in the open air." What sad, sweet murmurings were his in Scotland!

Pursuing the fortunes of the Saracen's Head still further, a humorous article on "A Dinner of the Day," descriptive of the hospitality of Mrs. McMillan's tavern, appeared in "The Laird of Logan" from the pen of the editor of that entertaining volume, Mr.



S. T. COLERIDGE.

J. D. Carrick. In this sketch the jovial laird himself was in the chair, and the party consisted of a dozen of the genial spirits of the time, under such fictitious names as Dr. Seggie, young Sillerknows, (the Laird of Auldgavel), "Bob" Hornshottle, &c. It was a merry night these gentry had, and the "*gaucy*, good-humoured, rattled-tongue landlady, with her rosy *haffets* and large, laughing, brown eyes," was no small part of the attraction at the table. What songs these *convivial* cronies sang, and what toasts they pledged over the big punch-bowl, which the Laird of Logan took care was equipped with a bottle of rum on one side and a bottle of brandy on the other! Well did Carrick, Motherwell, and Henderson—the

three leading contributors to the anecdotage of "the Laird"—know the convivialities of the Saracen's Head, and well, too, did the Glasgow magistrates enjoy the flavour of its punch and its claret. One apartment, indeed, was specially described as the "Magistrates' Room," and it is told that on the occasion of special civic hospitalities a couple of the town's officers in uniform and carrying their halberds were posted as a guard of honour at the inn door. It was here the Lords of Session put up while on circuit, and the celebrated "sporting" Duke of Hamilton used regularly to take up his quarters at the Saracen's Head when there was a good cock-fight in the district. Nearly all the coaches arrived here from the surrounding country, for the Saracen was a great posting establishment; and it is noted that the first London mail-coach rumbled up to the famous Gallowgate inn on July 7th, 1788. That was an event in local history, and to do the honours of the occasion the proprietor of the tavern, accompanied by a troop of horsemen, rode out with trumpets blowing to welcome the first arrival from the big city of London.

The fortunes of the Saracen's Head have been great indeed, but they have fallen on sad days, for no longer is the shout of the ostler, the rumble of the stage-coach, or the chorus of gallant songs to be

heard within its hospitable walls. Portion of the old building still stands at the corner of Saracen Lane, but there is no hostelry there now. Years ago, indeed, the signboard, with its ferocious Turk, scimitar in hand, was taken down and removed to a mere pub. across the Gallowgate.



IV.—“THE WEALTH OF NATIONS.”

“**N**O man can owe greater obligations to a society than I do to the University of Glasgow.”

Thus wrote Adam Smith on his election as Lord Rector, and it was no idle compliment that the great political economist conveyed in that interesting and grateful message to his *alma mater*. Smith owed everything save his own natural genius to the Old College of Glasgow.

From the day he came to the University from far-off Kirkcaldy, an awkward, uncouth lad, he found himself among encouraging and sympathetic friends. Young Smollett was then a student and apothecary's apprentice, Robert and Andrew Foulis were in a good

way of business as publishers and book auctioneers, and among the Professors were Drs. Hutcheson, Reid, Black, and Moor—the founders of the Glasgow Literary Society. “Jupiter” Carlyle, who came to the University a little later, knew Adam Smith well: “The most absent man in society I ever saw—moving his lips, talking to himself, and smiling in the midst of large companies.”

Little is told of Smith’s student days. For three years (1737-40) he remained at the University devoting himself particularly to the study of mathematics and moral and natural philosophy, the subjects presided over by the famous Professors Simson, Hutcheson, and Dick. Smith himself speaks most kindly, indeed lovingly, of all his College masters, but no man has left us such exquisite portraits of these learned gentlemen as “Jupiter” Carlyle. He had a most descriptive pen and a fine eye for characterisation.

“Mr. Simson,” he says, “though a great humorist, who had a very particular way of living, was well-bred and complaisant, was a comely man of good size, and had a very prepossessing appearance. He lived entirely in a small tavern opposite the College gate kept by a Mrs. Millar. He breakfasted, dined, and supped there, almost never accepted any invitations to dinner, and paid no visits

but to illustrious or learned strangers who wished to see the University. On such occasions he was always the cicerone." A portrait of him in the possession of the Senatus of the University presents the old professor in a merry mood, just as he might have looked after a gathering of the Anderston Club where his Greek verse was applauded with great gusto. Indeed, it was said of Simson that he was "master of all knowledge"—

except, perhaps, a knowledge of women, the society of ladies being his pet aversion. Dr. Hutcheson was likewise a man of great attainments, "good looking and of engaging countenance," and in possession of "a fervent, persuasive eloquence which was irresistible."

There is no doubt that at this period the teaching staff of the University was particularly brilliant, and Adam Smith was fortunate in his early studies to come under the influence of such gifted men.



ADAM SMITH.

At the end of his three years' study, having gained the "Snell" exhibition entitling him to go to Balliol College, Smith left for Oxford, and his connection with Glasgow was broken until eleven years later,

when, after a period of lecturing in Edinburgh, he was appointed Logic Professor at Glasgow University. This Chair he relinquished after four years occupancy for that of Moral Philosophy, which had been held by his old and distinguished teacher, Professor Hutcheson. For the Logic Chair both Edmund Burke and David Hume (whose friendship with Smith is well-nigh historical) were candidates, but curiously enough the appointment fell to a Mr. Clow, a person of "sound" views, but with neither the merit nor intellectual vigour of his opponents. These facts stated, the author of "*The Wealth of Nations*" is brought into proper association with the culture and literature of Glasgow, and some pictures of Adam Smith's life in the city may be presented in that conjunction.

For over twelve years Smith remained professor at the University, and he was one of the most popular men both at the College and in the city. He was a leading member of the first Glasgow Literary Society, with such celebrities on its roll as Professors Hutcheson and Reid, the brothers Foulis, and the brilliant orator Edmund Burke. David Hume, too, was an important member of this club, and had been introduced to Smith by Professor Hutcheson, the only man, Hume openly declared, from whom he would accept advice.

The Anderston Club, founded by Professor Simson, and meeting in the jovial hostelry of John Sharpe in the village of Anderston, was, however, at the time of Smith's appointment to the Logic Chair, the most distinguished society in the city or neighbourhood. Of this club, too, he was a shining light, though in such a society it was no easy matter to shine. Dr. Strang, a literary City Chamberlain, gives a fine account of this society's doings in "*Glasgow and its Clubs*," the most delightful and picturesque book ever written about Glasgow. It was at the Anderston Club, of a Saturday evening, that Professor Ross in a merry mood was wont to descant learnedly upon Smollett's "*Roderick Random*" and "*Peregrine Pickle*," and chuckle over his witty sallies for and against Toby; here the genial Simson oft displayed the subtle charm of his own Greek verse; here Robert Foulis modestly suggested his ambitious schemes for encouraging the love of art in Glasgow, long before the days of Horatio MacCulloch and Sir Daniel Macnee; and here Adam Smith, plain, unaffected, earnest in speech, but always glowing with his subject, gave the first evidence of his coming famous treatise by stating and examining theories on Free Trade and kindred topics. What a club that was!

Nor was Professor Simson's Friday Club far behind the Anderston in quality. Select persons these club-

men were, according to "Jupiter" Carlyle, himself a member. "It consisted chiefly," he says, "of Hercules Lindsay, Teacher of Law, who was talkative and assuming; James M'oor, Professor of Greek on the death of Mr. Dunlop, a very lively and witty man, and a famous Grecian, but a more famous punster; Mr. Dick, Professor of Natural Philosophy, a very worthy man of an agreeable temper; and Mr. James Purdie, the Rector of the Grammar School, who had not much to recommend him but his being an adept at Grammar."

Provost Andrew Cochrane, one of the most eminent Chief Magistrates Glasgow ever had, was likewise a person of much note in the town, and being a man of literary tastes and amiable disposition, he enjoyed the confidence and friendship of all the Professors. Himself one of the early Virginia merchants, the founder of a local club (of which Adam Smith was proud to be a member), and in some respects an author, this was the man who, as Provost, acted alike with valour and discretion to the honour of Glasgow during the occupation of the city by Prince Charlie and the insurgent troops in the stirring times of 1745. It was Provost Cochrane to whom Adam Smith was indebted, as he himself acknowledged, for much of the material out of which "The Wealth of Nations" was evolved, and Carlyle,

who knew Cochrane well, frankly admits that "too much could not be said of his accurate and extensive knowledge, of his agreeable manners, and colloquial eloquence." A handsome monument in the choir of the Cathedral keeps green the memory of this worthy man.

Adam Smith was Professor of Moral Philosophy when James Watt, at the age of twenty-one, came to Glasgow, and set up in business as a mathematical instrument maker, with rooms at the College, where he also studied natural philosophy, first under Professor Dick and latterly under Professor Anderson, the founder of Anderson's College. It was a model



JAMES WATT.

by the latter of Newcomen's steam-engine sent to Watt for repair which suggested to the marvellous youth the enormous possibilities of steam power, and out of these ideas sprang his great improvements on the steam-engine which have had such gigantic consequences in the world of engineering. From the College buildings he afterwards removed to a shop in Saltmarket, opposite St. Andrew's Square, where

he settled down to comfortable married life with Miss Millar, a Glasgow girl and a cousin, described as the "daughter of the chief magistrate of Calton." Ten years later his sweet and accomplished wife died, and after a couple of years of domestic solitude he again married—this time a Miss M'Gregor, a Glasgow merchant's daughter.

There is no need here to deal with Watt's engineering services to Glasgow—his improvement of the harbour, bridges, and water supply. The active, enlightened boy, who kept his Glasgow relatives out of bed far into the morning by thrilling stories which they could not resist, was surely enough father to the man whom Sir Walter Scott saw once at a meeting of Northern Lights:—

"Methinks I yet see and hear what I shall never see or hear again. In his eighty-first year, the alert, kind, benevolent old man had his attention at everyone's question, his information at everyone's command. His talents and fancy overflowed on every subject. One gentleman was a deep philologist—he talked with him on the origin of the alphabet, as if he had been coeval with Cadmus; another, a celebrated critic—you would have said that the old man had studied political economy and belles-lettres all his life; of science it is unnecessary to speak—it was his own distinguished walk."*

In 1808 Glasgow University, of which Watt

* From Sir Walter Scott's preface to the "Monastery."

had been so distinguished a student, bestowed upon him the degree of LL.D., and when in his eighty-fourth year he had passed away a statue was erected to his memory in George Square. Of course, Adam Smith must have come in contact with Watt, for his workshop at the College was the resort of all the Professors—Simson, Dickson, Dick, Moor, and Robinson being regular visitors to the sanctum of the inspired instrument maker.

James Boswell, the irrepressible little laird whose biography of Dr. Johnson gave the oracle a fame his own works never could have achieved for him, was likewise a student under Adam Smith at the Old College; and some years later Dugald Stewart,* the friend and biographer of Smith, attended the University classes in Glasgow, where he fell in love with Nelly Bannatyne, a merchant's daughter, who afterwards became his wife.

Among his students Adam Smith seems to have been well liked and worthily appreciated. His lectures aroused interest and discussion far beyond the University class-room, and are said to have given rise to a spirit of inquiry even among city men. Of course Adam Smith departed widely from the line of his predecessors, and devoted large portions of

* Afterwards the famous Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University.

his logic discourses, according to a grateful student, to "the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles-lettres." It was his later lectures on "Ethics" that he ultimately published under the title of "The Theory of Moral Sentiments"—a book which greatly enhanced Smith's reputation, and was the means of procuring him that appointment as tutor to the young Duke of Buccleugh, which proved helpful to Smith in many ways. It meant his leaving Glasgow University, but it was difficult to refuse the terms offered him by the Hon. Charles Townsend, who, according to Hume, "passed for the cleverest fellow in England." And so he was, for did he not marry the charming Duchess of Buccleugh herself?

So in 1763 Smith gave up the Chair of Moral Philosophy, and went off with the young Duke on a period of Continental travel. From Paris, however, he wrote to Hume complaining of his unhappy condition of spirits. "The life which I led at Glasgow," the letter ran, "was a pleasurable, dissipated life in comparison with that which I lead here at present." But things went better after a time, and the tour, which lasted three years, was most instructive and beneficial. On returning to this country Smith at once retired to his native Kirkcaldy, and for ten years, saving visits to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and London—London where he met

Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Johnson in the fine conviviality of clubland—he spent his time in his old home, writing "The Wealth of Nations."

Smith never married. His old mother and his cousin, Miss Douglass, the latter of whom superintended his household arrangements in Glasgow, seem to have been almost the only women-folk he showed more than ordinary care for. Dugald Stewart, however, speaks of a little love affair in which Smith had a disappointment with "a young lady of great beauty and accomplishment." Perhaps it was another case of the "Professor's Love-story" with Mr. J. M. Barrie's felicitous ending inverted.

It was during one of Adam Smith's trips to Glasgow (no doubt on a visit to his old friend, Provost Cochrane, who was of such assistance to him while compiling "The Wealth of Nations") that, according to Professor Miller, a violent democrat, and author of one or two well-known books, he met Dr. Johnson accompanied by Boswell, and, finding the oracle in a peppery mood, had been unfortunate enough to quarrel with him. Professor Miller says the dispute was about Adam Smith's letter to Strahan on the death of Hume, but, as Mr. R. B. Haldane points out in his biography of Smith in the "Great Writers" series, this could not have been so, for the meeting in question took

place in October, 1773, while Hume did not die till three years later.

The precise point in dispute is, however, rather a small matter, and no doubt Johnson could find plenty of irritants in Smith's character and writings—was not Smith, of all races in the world, a Scotsman?—without the quarrel being set down to the death



DAVID HUME.

of Smith's closest and greatest friend. That Smith and Johnson met in Glasgow is most likely, and that their interview was sharp and short is not incredible. Whatever it was, the economist insisted on the truth of his statement, whereupon Johnson said, "You lie." "You are the son of a —," retorted

Smith, and they parted. What a meeting for two such men! Sir Walter Scott had some belief in the story, for he accuses Boswell of suppressing it in his diary of the tour to the Hebrides.

The result of Smith's retirement to Kirkcaldy was seen in 1776, when the quarto volume of "The Wealth of Nations" was issued from the London press. It caused practically a revolution in politico-economic thought, and was praised by the greatest

thinkers of the time. Gibbon referred to it in his Roman History, Fox commended its doctrines to Parliament in a quotation from "my learned friend, Dr. Adam Smith," and Pitt, too, after the great economist had passed away, declared in the House of Commons that "*The Wealth of Nations*" was "the best solution to every question connected with the history of commerce or with the systems of political economy." It was a great, a monumental work; and even the Virginia merchants of Glasgow—shrewd, calculating men, with fine heads for figures—were overwhelmed by its proportions.* It is by this work that Adam Smith's name lives, yet no one fancied that, in accumulating facts about trade and commerce in the mercantile city of Glasgow, Smith contemplated so elaborate and decisive a treatise. Glasgow University was proud of Adam Smith, and is proud of him now; and as in 1787 it elected him Lord Rector, in succession to Edmund Burke, so his memory in our own day has been quickened by the establishment at Gilmorehill of an Adam Smith Chair of Political Economy.†

* Burns, who knew Adam Smith, was amazed at the industry displayed in this treatise. "I could not have given any mere *man* credit," he says, "for half the intelligence Mr. Smith discovers in his book."

† This Chair was added to the University equipment in October, 1896, Mr. William Smart, M.A., LL.D., being unanimously elected its first Professor.

Smith's election as Lord Rector was regarded by himself as a signal honour, and his letter to the Principal is well worth quoting:—

“No preferment could have given me so much real satisfaction. No man can owe greater obligations to a society than I do to the University of Glasgow. They educated me; they sent me to Oxford. Soon after my return to Scotland they elected me one of their own members, and afterwards preferred me to another office, to which the abilities of the never-to-be-forgotten Dr. Hutcheson had given a superior degree of illustration. The period of thirteen years which I spent as a member of that society I remember as by far the most useful and, therefore, by far the happiest and most honourable period of my life; and now after three-and-twenty years' absence to be remembered in so very agreeable a manner by my old friends and protectors, gives me a heartfelt joy which I cannot easily express to you.”

Three years later this distinguished student, professor, and Lord Rector of Glasgow University passed away, surviving his friend Hume by some fourteen years. This is neither the place nor the time to estimate Smith's position in the world of letters or his character as a man. Lord Lyttleton spoke of him as one of the glories of English literature, yet Lord Ellenborough found it impossible to read “*The Wealth of Nations*.” Even after his long life—he was sixty-seven when he died—he still

found composition a slow process, telling Dugald Stewart shortly before his death that "after all his practice in writing he composed as slowly and with as great difficulty as at the first." He was a man of little conversation, but of great mental vigour. He was far removed from the dandies of the time, for he affected the plainest of dress, and had but one vanity—the exquisite binding of the books in his library. "You see," he said to a friend who once remarked on this hobby of the economist, "I am a beau in nothing but my books."



V.—THE BOHEMIA OF BURNS.

GLASGOW just missed the opportunity of “discovering” Burns, for it was to Glasgow he came on his first effort to secure a publisher. This was in the summer of 1786, when Burns was in his twenty-eighth year. Farming having failed, and his love affairs proved disastrous, he had finally made up his mind to go abroad, but before setting out for Jamaica he had resolved, if possible, to get his verses into print.

The idea of being a published poet enchanted him. “It was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow,” he wrote to Dr. Moore, the friend of Smollett, and a striking literary figure in

Glasgow at the time ; while to Mr. Brice, a Glasgow shoemaker, he penned that famous letter about "my poor, dear, unfortunate Jean," in which he likewise mentions his "going to commence poet in print . . . just the last foolish action I intend to do, and then turn a wise man as fast as possible." Although this little vanity was not gratified till he approached John Wilson of Kilmarnock, on his journey home, the story of Burns's visit to Glasgow in search of a publisher is one of the most interesting episodes in his life. *

Furnished with a letter of introduction from his friend Gavin Turnbull to William Reid, then a youth in the employment of Messrs. Dunlop & Wilson, booksellers, printers, and publishers, the young poet set out from Mossgiel on his important mission with a bundle of MSS. in his pocket. These manuscripts no doubt included "The Cottar's Saturday Night," "Hallowe'en," "The Jolly Beggars," and many of his early love lyrics—perhaps that first youthful rapture which Nelly Kilpatrick, the blacksmith's daughter, inspired when the poet was but a lad of 15—

Oh, once I loved a bonnie lass,
Aye, and I love her still ;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.

* This account of the poet's first visit to Glasgow is based on the biographical materials supplied by Mr. John Reid to Rev. P. Hately Waddell for his "Life and Works of Burns."

As bonny lasses I ha'e seen,
 And mony full as braw;
 But for a modest gracefu' mien,
 The like I never saw.

It is said that Burns walked all the way to Glasgow, but it is more likely that he rode on his old mare Jenny Geddes, that swift but cautious animal which



ROBERT BURNS.

served him so well on his Highland tour. Arrived at Glasgow, however, the young farmer presented himself in his buckskins, topboots, and long drab greatcoat at the premises of the publishing firm, 98 Trongate, and made the acquaintance of Reid, explaining his errand about the poems, and asking also whether Reid could give him an introduction to any merchants who might obtain for him a post in the West

Indies. Reid, himself a youth of poetic temperament, took the poet aside and glanced over some of the verses. They were no mere jingling rhymes, and he read, and read, and was captivated. "Don't talk of the West Indies, sir!" he exclaimed to

Burns; "Edinburgh, not Jamaica, is the place for you." Here was encouragement. But apparently it was out of Dunlop & Wilson's line to publish poetry. Other local printers were recommended, but they likewise declined the undertaking. So that Burns went away disappointed.

What would have happened had young Reid been more than a mere apprentice—been, in fact, the literary partner of Brash & Reid, publishers, as he was some years later—it is not difficult to say, for, after all, Brash & Reid were (next at least to Stewart & Meikle) the first Glasgow publishers of Burns's poems. Out of this meeting between Reid and Burns, however, there sprang up a life-long friendship.

Next time Burns visited Glasgow—in 1787—it was a different meeting he had with Reid, for the critics had taken favourably to the Kilmarnock edition, and the young poet was just then returning from a triumphant reception in the Scottish capital. What a meeting that must have been! Flushed with the success of Edinburgh—the log-rolling of such literary giants as Dr. Blacklock (the blind poet), Henry Mackenzie, and Dugald Stewart; his portrait painted by the luminous brush of Nasmyth, and engraved by Beugo as a frontispiece to his first Edinburgh edition; his society sought after by

all the great folk of the Scottish metropolis, lords and ladies alike—what confidences must Burns and Reid have exchanged at that meeting! Edinburgh had been *the* place for Burns as Reid had said, and there was no talk of Jamaica now. So to the Black Bull or the Wheat Sheaf they went and dined gloriously. Many a jovial evening they spent together afterwards, for Reid's shop was always Burns's first place of call when he came to Glasgow, and, after business, adjourning to some quiet retreat they talked the time away. Unfortunately their long correspondence was lost to the world, for during the inundations of the river (February, 1831), Reid's house in Clyde Buildings was flooded and all the Burns letters were destroyed.

In the early part of 1788 Burns was a great deal in Glasgow. For one thing he was within easier reach of the city, for he was now established at Ellisland Farm on the great Glasgow Road, along which rumbled the old stage-coach from England. Indeed, according to Allan Cunningham, the coach actually ran through the poet's ground, and the sound of the post-horn often announced the arrival of visitors from Glasgow, where Burns had many and fast friends.

One memorable night in February, however, just before settling down at Ellisland, Burns met by

appointment at the Black Bull his brother William, and that old friend of his Irvine days, Captain Richard Brown. It was a hospitable occasion, and Burns was full of spirit—was it not the happy time of the Clarinda love affair?—and many a bumper would be drunk to her bright eyes in the best liquor Durie,* the landlord, could command. Burns had just come from Edinburgh—from Clarinda—and the moment he alighted at the old inn in Argyle Street he flew to pen and paper, and wrote to the charming Mrs. M'Lehose. Here was his letter:—

Glasgow, Monday evening, 9 o'clock,
18th February, 1788.

The attraction of love, I find, is in an inverse proportion to the Newtonian philosophy. In the system of Sir Isaac, the nearer objects are to one another the stronger the attractive force; in my system, every milestone that marked my progress from Clarinda, awakened

* The name of this boniface mentioned in one of Burns's letters has always been misprinted Davies, and a year or two ago a Mr. James Dow wrote to the press to say that the landlord in question was his great-grandfather and was named Davidson. As a matter of fact the gentleman was Mr. Thomas Durie, as the following extract from the first Glasgow Directory, then just published, will show:—"Durie Thomas, innkeeper, the sign of the Black Bull, north side Argyle-street." The building, greatly altered of course, still stands at the corner of Virginia Street, and is occupied as a drapery warehouse by Messrs. Mann, Byars, & Co.

a keener pang of attachment to her. How do you feel, my love? Is your heart ill at ease? I fear it. God forbid these persecutors [persons who had been condemning her attachment to the poet] should harass that peace, which is more precious to me than my own. Be assured I shall ever think of you, muse on you, and, in my moments of devotion, pray for you. The hour that you are not in my thoughts—"be that hour darkness! let the shadows of death cover it! let it not be numbered in the hours of the day!"

When I forget the darling theme,
Be my tongue mute! my fancy paint no more!
And, dead to joy, forget, my heart, to beat!

I have just met my old friend the ship captain; guess my pleasure—to meet you could alone have given me more. My brother William, too, the young saddler, has come to Glasgow to meet me; and here are we three spending the evening.

I arrived here too late to write by post, but I'll wrap half a dozen sheets of blank paper together, and send it by the fly, under the name of a parcel. You shall hear from me next post town. I would write you a long letter but for the present circumstance of my friend.

Adieu, my Clarinda! I am just going to propose your health by way of grace-drink.

SYLVANDER.

No doubt Clarinda would "prove an excuse for the glass," like the lady in Sir Harry Bumper's song, for Mrs. M'Lehose was a handsome woman, and had passed as "pretty Miss Nancy" in her native Glasgow, where her late father, Mr. Andrew Craig,

had been in practice as a surgeon, her uncle (Rev. William Craig) being a local minister. Her marriage at the age of seventeen with James M'Lehose, a young Glasgow lawyer, was a romantic but an unhappy one, and after five years of wedded life they separated, M'Lehose going off to Jamaica, where he subsequently settled down with another wife, much to "Clarinda's" mortification.

It was about six years after her separation that Burns first met this charming creature at tea in a friend's house in Edinburgh, and the poet there and then "lost his head." It was to her that he afterwards penned "Ae fond kiss," probably the most exquisite love lyric in the language.



Richard Brown, the friendly guest of this gathering at the Black Bull, was, curiously enough, the first correspondent to whom Burns mentioned this attachment, writing to him on December 30, 1787, that he was "at this moment ready to hang himself for a young Edinburgh widow." Brown was one of Burns's oldest friends, and Burns was a great believer in early companionship. "May the companions of

our youth be the friends of our old age," was his favourite toast, and Brown seems to have realised this idea of comradeship. Writing to him a few days after the Glasgow meeting Burns says—"I have met with few incidents in my life which gave me so much pleasure as meeting you in Glasgow. There is a time of life beyond which we cannot form a tie worth the name of friendship. 'Oh Youth! enchanting stage, profusely blest.'"

After this evening at the Black Bull, Burns appears to have spent the day with Reid, and on leaving Glasgow the poet was escorted by his young friend as far as Govan on his way to Paisley.

Again, during March, it would seem that Burns was a good deal about Glasgow. One letter (March 7, 1788) to Mr. Robert Muir, wine merchant, Kilmar-nock, mentions a visit early in the month, collecting on his way "several small sums owing me for my first edition about Galston and Newmilns"; on March 26 he wrote from Glasgow to Richard Brown apologising for not sending him "the Directory" (the first Glasgow Directory published by Nathaniel Jones, September, 1787); and a little later we find letters to James Candlish, a student at the Old College, in which Burns describes his progress with Johnson, the publisher, at the *Scots Musical Museum*, a collection of lyrics with musical setting. In one

letter Burns demands from Candlish for the second number a song called "Pompey's Ghost," and promises to show him a copy of the *Museum* when he comes to Glasgow "in a fortnight or less." Candlish was a bit of a rhymers himself, and "one of the worthiest fellows that ever man called by the name of friend."

They were, indeed, fast friends if these letters speak truly, and it was to "my ever dear old acquaintance" that the poet once wrote (March 21, 1787) of his religious bent:—"Experience of the weaknesses, not the strength, of human power made me glad to grasp at revealed religion." The lady who afterwards became Mrs. Candlish—the winsome and witty Miss Jane Smith—was one of the six "Mauchline belles" of whom the poet's Bonnie Jean was "the jewel o' them a'." The celebrated Dr. Candlish, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, was their son.

Some of the most interesting letters Burns ever put his pen to were written to his Glasgow correspondents. To Dr. Moore, one of the poet's earliest and most sincere admirers, he wrote again and again. It was to him that Burns addressed his long and famous autobiographical epistle describing his love affairs, literary leanings, and commercial pursuits—indeed, all the more interesting events of his life up

to his 29th year—upon which the early pages of every biography of the poet are founded.* In another letter to the same old Glasgow doctor and littérateur, Burns declares himself “very willing to admit that I have some poetical abilities,” but



DR. JOHN MOORE.

“not vain enough to hope for distinguished poetic fame.” Again he writes about having “married ‘my Jean,’ and taken a farm,” and makes unfavourable reference to the conduct of Creech, the publisher, whom he speaks of as “the Lord’s anointed Bailie of Edinburgh.” In still another letter Burns acknowledges receipt of “your most valuable present

‘Zeluco,’” a novel by Dr. Moore which in its day won considerable local renown; and Burns seems to have thought so well of the story as to gravely plan “a comparative view of you, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollett, in your different qualities and merits as novel-writers.” Writing at a later date, he reverts

* Dated Mauchline, 2nd August, 1787. “To divert my spirits a little,” he began, “in this miserable fog of ennui, I have taken a whim to give you a history of myself.”

to the subject of "Zeluco," in which he had discovered "original strokes that strongly depict the human heart," and which, he believed, set Moore down by the side of Fielding.

Mr. George Lockhart, merchant, living at "Mrs. Gray's, Prince's Street," was another of Burns's correspondents, and it was this jovial gentleman, according to Chalmers, who astonished Burns at one of the Glasgow gatherings by singing the poet's songs. "I'll be hanged," exclaimed Burns, "if I ever knew half their merit till now!"

At an early period of Burns's fortunes Mr. James Hamilton, a grocer in Trongate, had interested himself greatly in the poet, and when misfortune fell upon Hamilton the poet's sympathy was not lacking. "Among some distressful emergencies that I have experienced in life," he wrote to him, "I have ever laid this down as my foundation of comfort—that he who has lived the life of an honest man has by no means lived in vain."

One curiously interesting letter is well worth quoting. It is to Mr. Robert M'Indoe, silk merchant, whose shop was in Horn's Land, off Virginia Street. The poet's letter is as follows:—

Mauchline, 5th Aug., 1788.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am vexed for nothing more than I

have not been to Glasgow than not meeting with you. I have seldom found my friend Andrew M'Culloch wrong in his ideas of mankind ; but respecting your worship he was true as Holy Writ. This is the night of our Fair, and I, as you see, cannot keep well *in a line*; but if you will send me by the bearer, John Ronald, carrier between Glasgow and Mauchline, fifteen yards of black silk, the same kind as that of which I bought a gown and petticoat from you formerly—Lutestring, I think, is its name—I shall send you the money and a more coherent letter when he goes again to your good town. To be brief: send me fifteen yards black Lutestring silk, such as they used to make gowns and petticoats of, and I shall chuse some sober morning before breakfast, and write you a sober answer, with a sober sum which will then be due you from,

Dear sir, fu' or fasting, yours sincerely,

ROBERT BURNS.

The silk ordered here was no other than the material for Bonnie Jean's wedding gown, which it may interest ladies to know cost 5s. 9d. a yard. This letter passed into the possession of Mr. John Reid, Kingston Place, Glasgow.

Besides Burns's numerous correspondents, quite a number of other persons identified with the ploughman poet are associated with Glasgow. For example, Miss Wilhelmina Alexander, "the Lass o' Ballochmyle," latterly lived in a house, No. 60, on the east

side of George Square. She was a celebrated beauty in her young days, and the sister of Claude Alexander, of Ballochmyle estate. John Wilson, the Tarbolton schoolmaster, who was the doctor of Burns's "Death and Dr. Hornbook," removed to Glasgow immediately after the lampoon appeared, and settled down as session-clerk of Gorbals. Cromek, the author of the "Reliques of Burns," published in 1808, writing of a visit he paid to "Dr. Hornbook" in Glasgow, described him as a little stout man of swarthy complexion with black expressive eyes, and having "little or nothing of the pedant about him." He died at an advanced age in 1839, but up till the last no one dared allude to the poems of Burns in his presence. "Wabster Charlie," referred to in Burns's "Letter to James Tennant of Glenconner"—

"An' no' forgetting Wabster Charlie,
I'm tauld he offers very fairly"—

became, according to Dr. Hatley Waddell, the founder of the big chemical works at St. Rollox. It was from the lips of a Glasgow lady that Cromek obtained the lines of "The Lass of Cessnock Banks," a singularly accurate version of the original MS. which was not discovered till years afterwards. Rev. Dr. Lawrie, who was the first to awaken the blind poet of Edinburgh (Dr. Blacklock) to an appreciation of Burns's

merits, spent his later days in Glasgow, and it was of this worthy man, his wife, and his comely daughters that Burns wrote the beautiful lines "A Family in Heaven." Josiah Walker, an acquaintance of the poet, passed from being tutor of the Duke of Athole to the Humanity Professorship at Glasgow University. Mr. John Sheddin, a Dunlop Street merchant, and his daughter accompanied Burns on his Highland tour; a Glasgow carter is credited with the composition of the music of "Duncan Gray"; and was not Highland Mary on her way to the city when she was struck down with fever at Greenock, where she died and now lies buried?

Burns's business connections with the printers, publishers, and booksellers of the city were very slight. One capital story,* however, is told of a little transaction the poet had with John Smith, long the father of the local bookselling trade, and the founder of the firm of John Smith & Sons, still in existence. Burns had employed Smith to distribute copies of the Edinburgh edition and receive payments on his behalf, and when it came to settling up accounts Smith's little bill only showed a claim of 5 per cent. Burns was amazed at such moderation. "Faith!" he exclaimed, "you seem a very decent sort o' folk, you

* From Robert Alison's "Anecdote of Glasgow."

Glasgow booksellers ; but, eh, they're sair birkies in Edinburgh."

There were some "sair birkies" among the Glasgow publishers, nevertheless, for the moment the poet was dead they set upon his works, and quite a number of surreptitious "selections" were printed off. Of course several of the short pieces had been published here and there in sundry periodicals—for instance, "Wat ye wha's in yon toun?" originally appeared in the *Glasgow Magazine* for September, 1795—and in these there may not have been any actual copyright ; but in the case of "The Jolly Beggars," and notably "The Clarinda Correspondence," the action of the Glasgow publishers was not altogether commendable.

The first actual publication in book form of any of Burns's poems by a Glasgow publisher was the issue in 1796 by Stewart & Meikle of a curious little volume containing "'An Unco Mournfu' Tale'; to which is added 'The Antiquarian.'" Under these titles the poems will not be instantly identified by the general reader, but stripped of their disguise the "unco mournfu' tale" becomes "The Twa Herds ; or, The Holy Tulzie," the first of Burns's poems to see the light ; while "The Antiquarian" was the well-known effusion on Captain Grose's peregrinations throughout Scotland, beginning—

Hear, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
 Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groat's,
 If there's a hole in a' your coats
 I rede you tent it;
 A chiel's amang you taking notes,
 And, faith, he'll prent it.

Next to Stewart & Meikle as Burns publishers came Brash & Reid (Reid, the old friend of the poet), who, in an elaborate four-volume edition of "Poetry : Original and Selected" (1797), included several of Burns's poems, notably "Tam o' Shanter." The last volume of this collection had a monody on the death of Burns and an account of his funeral at Dumfries. Reid's favourite lyric was the tender tribute to Jean Armour, "Of a' the airts the wind can blaw," and in several editions of the poet's works a couple of stanzas from Reid's own pen, attuned to the sentiment of Burns, have been appended to the original.

Thomas Stewart, however, was the enterprising Glasgow publisher of these days, and his "Poems ascribed to Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Bard," issued in 1801, was the first local edition of the poet's works. This was followed the same year by like volumes from the press of Wm. M'Lellan, Chapman & Lang, and Thomas Duncan. These three may be dismissed with this mention, but Stewart was a "birkie" of a different calibre. He was in some things quite unscrupulous, but his remarkable daring

and unlimited assurance generally got him out of his difficulties with a swagger.

Take, for instance, the case of "The Jolly Beggars." The real history of this poetic cantata, composed by Burns in 1785, will never now be known, but Dr. Waddell gives a long account of how it probably came into the hands of Stewart, who first gave it to the world* in his thin octavo volume just alluded to. Stewart, as a matter of fact, published the poem without either the knowledge or consent of the poet's family, and when charged with this misdemeanour he replied with indignation that he had really rescued "The Jolly Beggars" from oblivion. And so he had. In 1793 Burns himself, replying to an inquiry by Thomson, declared that he had forgotten all about it, and as there was only one copy of it the chances of recovering the manuscript were very doubtful. It seems to have been passed carelessly from hand to hand (getting into the possession of Robert M'Limont, a Glasgow merchant, among others), and eventually it reached a safe and appreciative possessor in Thomas Stewart. It was a good find, and Stewart made good use of it, for after all the main point is that Burns's

* This was in 1799. The MSS. was advertised for sale in the Glasgow newspapers in 1853, price fifty guineas, and was purchased by Gilbert Burns, nephew of the poet, in whose possession it still remains.

jovial description of the gathering at Poosie Nancy's was not lost to his admirers. Lumsden, of Glasgow, produced a facsimile of the MS. in 1823.

In respect of the "Letters addressed to Clarinda" the same defence cannot be made for Stewart, for permission was given by Mrs. M'Lehose to quote a few extracts only, whereas the wily publisher printed all he got his hands upon. The issue of Stewart's volume in 1802, revealing for the first time, through these letters, Burns's romantic attachment for this lady, caused no small sensation in literary circles, and Mrs. M'Lehose was grieved and pained by the revelation.* According to Lowndes the volume was suppressed, but the irrepressible Stewart was not to be silenced in this way, and the same year he printed off another edition of the poems, announcing on the title-page that the letters to Clarinda would be found in the appendix. When the book was issued, however, the letters were nowhere to be found, interdict having been obtained against Stewart before the complete volume had gone to press.

These letters, sometimes extravagant even for a lover, are full of exquisite tenderness; and although

* This same year Burns's son appears to have matriculated as a student, for writing from Dumfries to Mrs. Riddel, in 1804, Mrs. Burns speaks of Robert being at Glasgow College, and having been there for two winters,

the late R. L. Stevenson was convinced that Burns "never really loved any woman," the gentle reader—that beautiful, docile, affectionate creature so responsive to words of love—will continue to believe that Burns at least displayed something uncommonly like it.

Little more remains to be said of the poet in his association with Glasgow. At the centenary of his birth, January 25, 1859, a great demonstration was held in the City Hall, with Sir Archibald Alison in the chair, and Samuel Lover, Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton), Norman Macleod, Blanchard Jerrold, and other men of literary mark among the company. Eighteen years later—January 25, 1877—Ewing's statue of Burns in George Square was unveiled by Lord Houghton in the midst of a great throng. Raised by shilling subscriptions, the Statue Fund speedily reached the necessary £2000, and the sculptor's design, suggested by Burns's lines "To a Mountain Daisy," is happy both in conception and execution. It is interesting to recall the fact that, at the banquet in the Crown Halls which succeeded the unveiling ceremony, David Wingate, the poet, and the late Professor Blackie were among the guests—"dear old Blackie," one of the most earnest admirers of Burns, and a figure scarcely less remarkable in the eyes of his countrymen than the national bard himself.

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Of Burnsiana there is no finer public collection than that to be found in the Poets' Corner in the Mitchell Library, the number of volumes (including nearly every Scottish, English, Irish, French, and German edition) having increased from 600 in 1880 to 1300 at the end of 1896. This, together with the active existence of some nineteen Burns Clubs, ought to keep the poet's memory very green in the heart of Glasgow.



VI.—THOMAS CAMPBELL AT HOME.

THOMAS CAMPBELL was only a lad of ten or eleven when Burns came about Glasgow, and it does not appear that he ever chanced to meet the ploughman poet. This is a little curious, for Campbell was attached to the Muse at a very early age, and at ten had a craze for writing verses, the death of a favourite parrot providing the theme of "my first splendid lyric," as he afterwards pathetically called it. Besides, Scott was but sixteen when, through a son of Adam Ferguson, he obtained the opportunity of meeting Burns at Edinburgh;

and young Campbell, with his remarkable precocity, could have found plenty of channels through which to meet the wondrous lyric poet of whom all literary Scotland was then talking.

Campbell's father, however, did nothing to encourage his son's talent for poetry. In fact, he constantly rebuked him for wasting his time "scribbling such nonsense," while Tom's elder brother put the boy-poet's effusions into the fire. But old Alexander Campbell was, after all, the typical Scottish parent of the time, grave and earnest in the world's affairs, suspicious of the future of any boy who dissipated his talents on poetry, and firmly believing that no youth could come to any good who did not study Locke in the leisure of all week-days, with Doddridge and Sherlock for Sunday reading. This was a little disturbing to the cultivation of the Muse, for young Campbell had a genuine love for his father. The figure of the old man in his snuff-brown suit lecturing his poet-son from his arm-chair is an interesting and pathetic picture. He was all for theology, history, and the abstract sciences; to him poetry was a vanity. He was the friend of Adam Smith, and the confidant of that grand old moral philosopher Professor Thomas Reid, of Glasgow College, after whom the poet took his Christian name, and by whom he was baptised. Only one

of the arts appealed to this rugged old Virginia merchant, and that was music, and his son relates of him that he could sing a good naval song. With what gusto he would have shouted "Ye Mariners of England" had he but lived to know his boy's martial lyric!

Campbell's birthplace has long been a matter of dispute, and for years a picturesque old building at the south corner of Nicholas Street and High Street was pointed out as the house where the poet was born. Anyone, however, who had cared to investigate the subject at all would have found that this is not the case. The poet himself described the place to Mr. Alexander Craig, the Glasgow artist who painted his portrait, explaining that the house stood a little west of High Street, near the foot of Balmano Brae and in the line of the present George Street, the opening up of which by the town authorities in 1794 swept this old literary landmark away. Then, again, Howitt, a contemporary writer, in his "Homes and Haunts of the British Poets," speaks of the building having been demolished; while Dr. William Beattie, the old friend, biographer, and executor of the poet, refers to the house in his "Life and Letters of Thomas Campbell" (1849) as having "long since disappeared under the march of civic improvement."

Born in his father's house in the vicinity of High Street (July 27, 1777), Tom, the last of a family of eleven, was a very precocious child, and used to astonish his parents by saying quaint old-fashioned things that were much too wise for his little curly head. At the age of eight he was handed over to the care of Mr. Allison, the scholarly



master of the Grammar School—the school at which J. G. Lockhart, the biographer of Scott, was trained some thirteen or fourteen years later—and the little chap had scarcely got over the three R's ere he developed a remarkable enthusiasm for Latin and Greek, and drank deeply of Horace and Virgil. But Campbell was not a melancholy, pale-faced, priggish book-worm. Quite the contrary. When at the age of fourteen he commenced his first session at the old college he declared that he was “much more inclined to sport than study”—and with his pranks and verses he did some mischief at the University like the rest of them—while he won a good reputation for telling “auld farrant stories,” and a bad one as a player on the flute. As a

flute-player, indeed, Goldsmith, one of his favourite poets, could have beaten him hollow. Nor was Campbell long at college ere he made a name for himself with the professors as well. During his student life he cultivated the Muse right loyally. A pocket edition of "Paradise Lost" accompanied him alike to field and college, he won prizes for his English and Greek verses, and even came to be called the Alexander Pope of Glasgow.

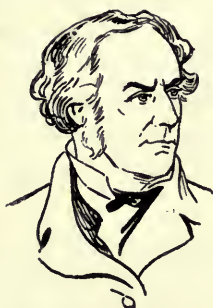
Campbell was a youth of eighteen before Dr. Strang, one of the worthiest of Glasgow's literary men, was born, but the doctor, from personal accounts of the young poet's college life, describes him as "a fair and beautiful boy, with a mild and cheerful disposition, who might every day be met hurrying down High Street in a scarlet toga and turning into the University gateway as the tinkling bell of that ancient seminary was summoning the students to their class-rooms. This youth," he proceeds, "was the obscure Thomas Campbell, now the world-renowned poet, who at that period occupied a small room in a house on the north-west side of High Street, within which the dawning dreams of those 'Pleasures of Hope' which he afterwards so well illustrated in his immortal verse first flitted athwart his poetic fancy."*

* Strang's "Glasgow and its Clubs."

of this little upper-floor chamber, too, that Campbell penned the 140 lines of "Morven and Fillan," which he had printed on slips of paper "like a baw-bee ballad," and which is believed to have been the first draft of "Lord Ullin's daughter." The poet's life at college was one long success. He was early made a college tutor, and Professor Jardine appointed him an examiner of the students' Logic exercises—surely a high compliment for a boy of sixteen. A Greek poem by Campbell, praying for a holiday on the occasion of some public ceremony, so delighted even the accomplished and erudite Professor Young that he instantly set the class at liberty. Other verses followed, and, according to Dr. Duncan, during Campbell's second session the "whole college was ringing with his satirical effusions." During the summer vacation of 1793 he made a trial in a Glasgow solicitor's office, but he disliked the business and was glad to get back to college, his translations, and his poetry. And one of his first Greek translations this session was described by Professor Young as the "best essay that had ever been given in by any student at the University"; while, in Professor Arthur's Moral Philosophy Class, Campbell wrote a verse essay on the Origin of Evil, for which he afterwards received the prize, and which, he says, "gave me a local celebrity throughout all Glasgow, from the High

Church down to the bottom of Salt Market. It was even talked of, as I am credibly informed, by the students over their oysters at Lucky MacAlpine's, in the Trongate!"

Among Campbell's fellow-students and friends at college were Hamilton Paul, a jovial fellow with a talent for verse, and the originator of the College Debating Club, the members of which usually met in Hamilton's lodgings; James Thomson, a kindred genius, and a good flute-player, known as the "Doctor," with whom he formed a life-long friendship; and Gregory Watt, a son of the famous engineer, whose friendship Campbell also enjoyed.



SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

The young poet's college sport was not unlike the usual student fun, but he had a wit very much above his fellows, and his last college joke, though known pretty generally, is well worth a place in this local literary record. The jealousies of two shopkeepers—one Fife, a Trongate apothecary (who advertised "Ears pierced by A. Fyfe"), and his next-door neighbour, Drum, a spirit dealer—had long amused and puzzled the students, who were eager to play a prank upon

the disagreeable pair. One evening Campbell had a brilliant idea, and with the aid of his brother Daniel and another the jest was carried out at midnight without molestation. It had been suggested to the irate tradesmen that a partnership would end their jealousies, which lent all the greater humour to Campbell's practical joke, and no small sensation prevailed in the Trongate next day when a mob gathered round the shops and roared with laughter at the spectacle of a huge sign-board stretching across both shop-fronts and bearing the singularly appropriate quotation from "Othello":—

The spirit-stirring Drum,
Th' ear-piercing Fife.

The joke was the talk of the town, and a sudden partnership said to have been entered into by the two tradesmen the night before was as suddenly dissolved.

On leaving college, Campbell, owing to his father's reduced circumstances,* accepted a post as tutor to a family in the Hebrides, but after five months of this occupation he returned home heartily sick of the business. "God wot," he writes, "I was better pleased to look on the kirk steeples and whinstone

* The old man, then in his sixty-fifth year, had lost £20,000 by the collapse of his business during the American War.

causeways of Glasgow than on all the eagles and wild deer of the Highlands." And had not R. L. Stevenson, the novelist, a similar affection for his native Edinburgh?—"I will say it fairly—it grows on me with every year—there are no stars so lovely as Edinburgh street lamps. When I forget thee, Auld Reekie, may my right hand forget its cunning."

Returning to Glasgow, Campbell resumed his position as college tutor, attending also the Greek, Law, Logic, and Moral and Natural Philosophy Classes, and among his pupils was a youth named Cuninghame, who boarded with Campbell's father, and who afterwards became Lord Cuninghame in the Justiciary Court, Edinburgh.

In June, 1796, Campbell completed his college career. He had serious thoughts of abandoning poetry and going in for law, but luckily he did nothing of the kind, for however much his talent as a poet may be disputed, there can be no question that he would have made a very indifferent lawyer. After a short period tutoring General Napier's son (afterwards Sir William Napier) at Downie, and writing amorous sonnets to the "adorable Caroline," the belle of Inveraray, Campbell at length made for Edinburgh, and being introduced by Hugh Park, a Glasgow teacher, to Dr. Robert Anderson, author of the "Lives of British Poets," he ultimately got some

literary work to do for Mundell & Son, the publishers. This was excellent fortune, and, overjoyed at his prospects, he immediately set out for home with the good news, walking all the way to Glasgow!

The work was not of a very ambitious kind, but Campbell had hopes of astonishing the literary lions of Edinburgh by a translation of the Greek tragedy

"Medea." How sanguine a poet is at twenty! His time in Edinburgh, however, was not ill spent, for he enjoyed the friendship of the famous Jeffrey, which was the passport to any literary coterie in the capital. In his desultory visits to Glasgow he also mingled with the little band of minor poets and *littérateurs* who made up the literary life of St. Mungo. James Grahame, author of "The Sabbath" and other poems, as well



JAMES GRAHAME.

as an historical drama on the subject of "Mary Stuart," was one of Campbell's old friends in Glasgow. Grahame was a man of some poetic feeling, but he was curiously modest for a poet, and contrived the most elaborate schemes to prevent his identity as a writer becoming known. It is told of him, indeed, that he used to meet the printer's boy

in all sorts of out-of-the-way places in order even to correct the proof-sheets of his work. James Cleland (afterwards Dr. Cleland and Master of Works for the city) was at this time a young man of twenty-seven with literary leanings which ultimately prompted his historical and statistical volume, "The Rise and Progress of Glasgow." Quite a host of youths, some of them afterwards celebrities of much more than local renown, were now running about the Glasgow streets. Young John Wilson (the never-to-be-forgotten "Christopher North"), a thin, lythe figure in toga and top-boots, had just come to the University at the age of twelve. Sir William Hamilton, the distinguished philosopher, was now but a boy of nine playing after school hours in the gardens of the old college, where his father, Dr. William Hamilton, was Professor of Anatomy and Botany. Tom Hamilton, a younger brother, and the author of "Cyril Thornton" (into which he introduced such local characters as Daniel Spreul, his servant Girzy, and "Bell Geordie") was at this time a valiant little chap of seven, with wild notions of being a soldier, which ambition he eventually realised, attaining the rank of captain in the 29th Regiment of Infantry. Alexander Rodger, the local poet, was serving his apprenticeship as a weaver in the Drygate; John Robertson, a "minstrel of the Merse," was following the same trade; while

John Findlay, a ballad writer of local repute, was in his fifteenth year; and J. D. Carrick, a mere boy, was at work in the office of Mr. Nicholson, the architect, with no thought of "Whistle Binkie" or "The Laird of Logan."

During his visits to Glasgow in these days Campbell occupied himself with various literary schemes. In the house in Charlotte Street, to which the family had removed, he worked diligently on "The Pleasures of Hope," that poem which was to give him so much renown in the world of letters. It was at this period, too, that he wrote "The Wounded Hussar," which was "sung in the streets of Glasgow, and soon found its way over the whole kingdom." His last visit to his father's house in Glasgow was in July, 1798, for the family this summer removed to Edinburgh to a small house at St. John's Hill, where the young poet's literary labours were continued.

"The Pleasures of Hope" was published in April, 1799, by Mundell, who paid Campbell £60 for the copyright. The poem made a hit at once, and in his twenty-second year Campbell found himself a celebrity entertained and honoured by such men as Henry Mackenzie, Dugald Stewart, and Sir Walter Scott. Madame de Staël wrote in admiration of the poem, and as one edition after another

was printed off the lucky Edinburgh publishers, more generous with Campbell than they appear to have been with Burns, sent the author an occasional £50.

In 1801 Campbell's father died, and the poet betook himself to London—that great, bustling, inspiring city which has been the joy or despair of many a young provincial since Thomas Campbell's days. Like all the rest he, too, had his early struggles and hardships, but it is pleasant to think that Sir John Moore, the hero of Corunna and a fellow-citizen of Glasgow, was the first to seek out his young countryman and bid him take courage. "He showed me notice," says Campbell, "and called upon me at my lodgings when I first came to London." It was a kindly action, and Campbell never forgot it, and as if to mark the esteem in which these men held each other, statues of the two friends—the soldier and the poet—stand almost side by side in our own George Square.

[Even in these trying days in London, Campbell, out of his own slender earnings, and though the youngest son, was almost exclusively supporting his old mother in her Edinburgh home, and it was a slanderous statement made by a member of the Glasgow Female Society (there were New Women even in those days) that Campbell had abandoned

another "near relative," when in point of fact this very relative was the person with whom he had, year after year, divided his last guinea. When literary work became more plentiful and remunerative, and the poet, in Byron's phrase, "dressed to sprucery" in a blue coat and a dashing wig, he bethought him to get married, and on September 10, 1803, he led to the altar in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, Matilda Sinclair, "a beautiful, lively, and lady-like woman," and the daughter of an ex-Provost of Greenock.

Byron, Moore, Rogers, and Sidney Smith were among the men of letters Campbell knew in London, and, later, he met Sheridan Knowles, the dramatist (who had come up from Glasgow), and likewise Watt, the venerable engineer. "I have been at James Watt's," he writes.* "Watt himself is now eighty-three, but so full of anecdote that I spent the most amusing day I ever had with a man of science and a stranger to my own pursuits."

Campbell's mother had been dead three years, and the little household at Edinburgh broken up, when the poet paid a return visit to Glasgow. This was in May, 1815, and he at once found himself "in the midst of new excitements." What old friends he had to meet, and how the familiar faces beamed

* February 4, 1819.

to see the poet among them once again! All his old haunts were visited—the College, the houses in High Street and Charlotte Street, the Grammar School, and even Lucky MacAlpine's oyster bar in the Trongate, where many a merry night had been spent with his fellow-students in the old days. What stories were told all over again, and what hospitalities offered and accepted!

Indeed, so merry was the time Campbell spent on this occasion that he was obliged to decline a very pressing invitation to lecture in Glasgow a little later. "I know well what would happen," he wrote: "I should enjoy hospitality to the prejudice of my health."*



This brings us up to the time of Campbell's invitation to become a candidate for the Lord Rectorship of Glasgow University, an agreeable and interesting period of his career. It was in February, 1826, that his University friends

* Dickens had a like experience, but he was not a Scotsman, and doubtless more easily escaped the perils of haggis and whisky punch.

first approached him on the subject, assuring him that he had a strong party among the students who would ensure his election. Though in indifferent health and in great uncertainty as to his pecuniary affairs, Campbell was too proud to refuse the honour offered him by the "darling boys" of his old *alma mater*, and he allowed himself to be nominated. For opponents he had Mr. Canning and Sir Thomas Brisbane, but it was a students' battle (all the professors except Millar and Jardine opposing the poet-candidate), and it was a students' victory, for Campbell obtained a majority in all four Nations. The contest, however, was an exciting one, for the opposition of the professors was evidently very bitter, and it was with a glow of pride that Campbell read the official document despatched from Principal Macfarlane on November 15, 1826, intimating that he had that day been elected Lord Rector. "Lord Rector of Glasgow University!" we can fancy him exclaiming in his rapturous, enthusiastic way; "my dear boys, I am positively proud of you!"

Early in April of the following year Campbell set out by coach for Glasgow to deliver his inaugural address, which he did to an overflowing assembly in the old College Hall. And if his private visit twelve years before had been splendid in hospitality, what must have been his public reception at this time?

One student describing the Rectorial address writes : "To say we applauded is to say nothing. We evinced every symptom of respect and admiration from the loftiest tribute, even our tears—drawn forth by his eloquent recollections of olden times—down to escorting him with boisterous noise along the public streets." Writing of this function himself (April 13, 1827) the poet says : "Yesterday was the crisis ! I rose this morning at seven rejoicing that it went off so well ; and I am going out in a sweet sunny morning to stroll round the haunts of my boyhood. What a change from this day week ! . . . Matilda having brought seventy parcels of baggage kept me uneasy with the fear of losing them !"

On this visit to Glasgow, Campbell was the guest of his cousin Mr. Gray, Claremont Place—"my dearest Gray," who took such an interest in the poet's election, and who never failed him in encouragement and friendship—and the two were scarcely ever separate when in Glasgow. It was at this time, too, that Campbell, after a visit to the "green waving woods on the margin of Cart," wrote his four tender stanzas on this scene of his youth, for it was to the village of Cathcart he had once been sent to recuperate during an illness in his Grammar School days.

Until the 1st of May, Campbell remained in Glasgow, banqueting with the Corporation, dining

with the professors and the Senatus, hearing explanations by the Faculty, and coaching himself up in University ordinances and finance. His dinner with the Senatus was, curiously enough, his second appearance before that august body, the first being in his mischievous young days when he was brought before the same Principal for breaking the College Church windows. A great time it was for the poet in Glasgow, but he must have been heartily sick of it all. "I dare hardly show myself in the garden," he wrote, "for fear of being cheered."

It seems a pity that John Galt, the poet and dramatist, was not there to see this triumph of the friend of his youth. Galt had always believed in Campbell's merits, and had done much to stimulate the talents of the young Glasgow bard. The fourteen or fifteen years which Galt spent at Greenock in early life had been full of pleasant reminiscences of Campbell. These were the days when Galt himself had been poor but ambitious—days of delightful excursions with James Park and Agnew Crawford, "tramping twenty-two miles to Glasgow before breakfast"—an expedient, as Galt calls it, "to make a light purse supply a voracious curiosity." In his autobiography of that period Galt talks proudly of his many visits to the Glasgow theatres to see the great London stars, and here it was that his own dramatic instincts

were first aroused. Nobody has much nowadays to say for Galt's plays, yet Lockhart and Captain Hamilton, the author of "Cyril Thornton," wrote a prologue for one of them ("The Appeal"), and Sir Walter Scott supplied its witty epilogue—"the only piece of humorous poetry," says Galt, "which, as far as I am aware of, ever flowed from his pen." Scott, however, did not think the epilogue quite up to his standard, for he begged Galt never to mention the circumstance.

Galt tells one good story about John Davidson, the editor of the old *Greenock Advertiser*, and Campbell, which has often been credited to other sources and as often discredited altogether. Here is the episode as described in Galt's own

words in his Autobiography: "When Campbell wrote his 'Battle of Hohenlinden' I got an early copy, which I sent to Mr. Davidson to be inserted, but he with a sage face afterwards told me that it was not worthy of a place in his paper."

Perhaps, amid all the applause of his rectorial election, Campbell may even have recalled this



diverting incident by reason of a slight rebuff which he met with at the University. He had intended delivering two lectures to the students on "The History of Learning," but in deference to the objections (heaven knows why!) of the principal and professors, he had to abandon the idea, though he afterwards published them in the *New Monthly*, of which he was editor, as "Letters to the Students of Glasgow." In July of the same year he presented a gold and silver medal to his "dear boys" for the best composition in English verse.

This concluded the proceedings of Campbell's first election, but for three successive terms he was elected head of the College. On his second election the students opened a subscription for a full-length portrait of their Rector, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, the (then) President of the Royal Academy, to be placed in the great hall of the Museum. "Poor fellows," wrote Campbell, "they were so simple as much to miscalculate Sir Thomas's prices. One of them was deputed to call on me here [in London], and I could not but observe that his heart had been damped at hearing of the £500! But he said, 'Well, if we should pledge our gowns at the end of the session, we will make it up.'" The proposal moved Campbell deeply, and he had great delicacy in dealing with the matter; but, calling on

Lawrence, the artist "behaved most handsomely," offering to do the bust for one hundred and fifty guineas, and get the drapery finished by another for fifty more! "Nothing could be more generous," remarks the poet, though he reproached himself for not altogether discouraging this idea of his "darling boys." To commemorate his third election as Lord Rector,* the Campbell Club was formed.

Following the Rectorial honours, Campbell's friends in Glasgow next exerted themselves to get the poet to offer himself as a candidate for the Parliamentary representation of the city, but in this he was firm and decisive. "It would be my ruin," he wrote to Gray, "were I elected *even for Glasgow*." So he preferred to continue his literary work, to pursue his vigorous correspondence with the German patriots, and to involve himself deeply in the Polish Association.

Mrs. Campbell, the poet's wife, had now been dead some four years, and Campbell was living alone in a London attic, working hard at his biography of Mrs. Siddons, the great actress, and "weeping for hours" when in his search for other things he came across a bit of ribbon or a trinket of "poor Matilda's." But the Polish cause was the great occupation of his pen at this time, and when the old Polish poet

* Sir Walter Scott was put forward as a candidate on this occasion, but withdrew.

Niemciewicz, the friend of Kosciusko, came to Scotland, he must needs send him to Glasgow—and, of course, to Gray. Everybody must know Gray, the kindest and most hospitable of men. During his own visits in 1836, Campbell made his home at Gray's, received deputations at Gray's, and was even "struck all of a heap" (as he himself described it)



SAMUEL HUNTER.

by the pretty maid-servant at Gray's. Writing of one deputation from the Campbell Club—"two coach-loads of them"—the poet gives a vivid little portrait of the celebrated Samuel Hunter, who had invited him to dinner:—

"Among the invitations which I much regret being unable to accept, is one from Samuel H——, editor of the Glasgow *Argus*, a flaming *Tory*, but a most original, honest

fellow, whom the very Radicals like. Sam is a sort of Falstaff, without either his knavery or his drunkenness. His facetiousness is a godsend in relieving the fudge of a public dinner. . . . Tory as he is, he supported me in my election to the Rectorship, and when some waggish enemy published that my mother had been a 'washerwoman in the Goosedubs of Glasgow,' Samuel's zeal to repel the calumny was perfectly amusing."

And here, too, is a good story about Christopher North (Professor Wilson), who had come from Edin-

burgh to be present at the Campbell Club dinner, and joined another deputation to the poet. Gray and his family were from home, and the office of host accordingly devolved upon Campbell, assisted by the pretty maid-servant before referred to. He says :—

“I ran to get refreshments for them, and fair Margaret brought them in. The professor looked at her with so much admiration that I told him in Latin to contain his raptures, and he did so ; but rose and walked round the room like a lion pacing his cage. . . . Before parting, he said, ‘Cammel, that might be your ain Gertrude !’* Could not you just ring and get me a sight of that vision of beauty again?’ ‘No, no,’ I told him—‘get you gone, you Moral Philosopher loon, and give my best respects to your wife and daughters !’”

Christopher North was, of course, one of the jovial spirits of the Campbell Club dinner in the Argyll Hotel (Tuesday, June 21, 1836), and a memorable function it was, lasting, according to the club records, from six o’clock that evening “till the light of another day dawned on their carousals.”

Dr. Beattie’s biography of the poet is brimful of those characteristic sketches of life in Glasgow at Campbell’s time, which give colour to the whole picture. For Beattie, of course, had full access to

* Referring to the heroine of Campbell’s poem, “Gertrude of Wyoming.”

those letters and documents which alone could make the task of biographer a creditable and satisfactory one. Then he was Campbell's family doctor—"my kind, dear physician"—a fortunate man, with a charming wife, and whose home at Hampstead was "a little picture of Paradise."

In August of 1836 Campbell was again in Glasgow, and in a letter about his being refused the freedom of Paisley, the Town Council giving it to Christopher North instead, he makes this facetious remark:—"Only think of my misfortune! Who knows that I might not have set up a snuff-shop at Paisley, with a Highlander for a sign-post—called it the 'Lochiel snuff-shop'—made lots of money—and become a bailie of Paisley!" Nevertheless Campbell, taking no offence, was actually present at the dinner given to Wilson at Paisley, and they spent a very merry time besides at the races, the two literary sportsmen being so much interested as to have an even £50 on one of the events.

His next visit to Glasgow was in July of the following year, when he addressed an enthusiastic meeting of the Polish Association which Gray had been concerned in forming. In March, 1841, he returned to the scenes of his youth, calling upon, among others, his old friend Dugald Bannantyne, a man of kindred tastes, secretary of the Chamber

of Commerce, and afterwards Glasgow postmaster. Doubtless, too, there would be a good many calls at Smith's bookshop in Hutcheson Street—Dr. Smith of Crutherland, "my liberal friend and publisher"—where Christopher North likewise took his literary wares in the days when his muse was young.

This was, it would seem, the poet's last visit to his native city. Three years later he died at Boulogne, breathing his last in the calm of a summer afternoon. There was a question as to whether the remains should be brought to Glasgow, but the greater honour of a burial in Westminster Abbey was bestowed upon the dead poet. His statue from the chisel of the late Mr. Mossman (of which memorial the literary Sheriff Glassford Bell was the most active promoter) stands prominently in George Square, close by the lofty column reared to his friend Sir Walter Scott, and the statue of his greater fellow-poet, Robert Burns; a bust of him, executed by E. H. Bailey, was presented by Mr. James M'Clelland to the Corporation Galleries; and a three-quarter length portrait of the poet by Alexander Craig, the Glasgow artist, hangs in the same galleries.

Among the great poets of the language, Campbell may not take a very exalted place, but as the poet of freedom—the defender of the down-trodden Poles, as Byron was the champion of the Greeks—his

memory will ever be cherished ; while as student, LL.D., and Lord Rector of the University, he presents an outstanding figure in the literary history of Glasgow.



VII.—ROMANCE OF CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

“**W**HO can revert to the literature of the land of Scott or of Burns,” Dickens once asked at an Edinburgh dinner, “without having directly in his mind, as inseparable from the subject and foremost in the picture, that old man of might, with his lion heart and sceptred crutch—Christopher North?”* Who, indeed? In the early part of the century he was a familiar figure in Glasgow, sweeping along the streets with his great stride, his wealth of hair falling over his shoulders,

* Speech proposing the health of Christopher North, who presided, at the public dinner to Dickens at Edinburgh, June 25, 1841.

carrying his breeze with him, as J. M. Barrie said of the late Professor Blackie, who in spirit, in character, and in strong manly vigour has been well described as the modern Christopher North. And yet there were not many years between them after all, for plain John Wilson was but twenty-four when the infant Blackie first saw the light in his father's house in Charlotte Street, off Gallowgate, close to where his brother poet, Thomas Campbell, had lived in his early days.

John Wilson—for, of course, "Christopher North" was but a pseudonym—came up to Glasgow from his native Paisley at the age of twelve to attend the University. His father had just died, leaving him £50,000. He was not, therefore, handed over, like so many young students of his time, to the tender mercies of a slovenly landlady with a dusky back attic to let, but was very luxuriously quartered with the family of Professor Jardine in the College Buildings. Indeed, so pleasant were the society and surroundings amid which young Wilson found himself, that he began his college career by falling in love with Margaret Lindsay, the pretty little niece of his Logic master, the professor aforesaid. Then he had a dear and devoted grandmother in Glasgow, "the stateliest among the stately," whose eyes "had not yet shed many tears but tears of joy and pity."

This charming old lady was Mrs. Sym, the wife of a Glasgow writer who figured later on as Timothy Tickler in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ." Their daughter, Miss Catherine Sym, a clever and gentle creature, was spoken of as "one of the wittiest women of her time."

In the midst of society so pleasant the boy Wilson could not fail to have a very happy time during his student days, and this slender youth, as depicted in Raeburn's portrait, with placid face and mild blue eyes, spent six wholesome and useful years of his life (1797-1803) attached to the apron-strings of his *alma mater*. Professors Jardine and Young were his favourite masters, but who could have helped loving Professor Young, that old man eloquent with his splendid good-humour, his wondrous classical enthusiasm, and his remarkable "Scotch Greek." He was a man of the same race as Christopher North and John Stuart Blackie, a strangely beautiful and radiant figure in the then grave and solemn group of Glasgow professors. "He taught me," wrote Christopher North, "to love the Sixth Book of the 'Iliad,' and if we understand it not, then, indeed, has our whole life been vainer than the shadow of a dream."

Mrs. Gordon,* in her "Memoir" of Christopher North, gives some pleasant pictures of her father's

* Daughter of Christopher North.

early life in Glasgow. Like his friend Thomas Campbell, he wrote many dainty juvenile verses at college, learned to play the flute, and even extracted some "most discordant sounds" from the violin. His athletic qualities, however, raised him very high in the esteem of his fellow-students; and the first recorded instance of his prowess was the winning of five shillings as a wager for running three times round the professors' garden in nine minutes and a quarter!

A diary which he kept at this time contains many curious entries showing that his delights were of a very miscellaneous kind. Take one dated February 13, 1801, for instance—"Called on my grandmother; went to the sale of books; had a boxing match with Lloyd—beat him." And another—"For barley sugar at my old man's,* most excellent, 6d." In the same diary there are frequent references to walking matches, beating Andrew Napier, and being "most nearly approached" in athletics by Norman Macleod, father of the more celebrated Norman of the old Barony Church.

A book-lover as well as an athlete, young Wilson must have known most of the booksellers and book-auctioneers in Glasgow. It was too early in

* A little confectionery shop owned by an old man named Baxter, and much frequented by young Wilson.

the century for the literary lounge which David Robertson's book-shop in Trongate ultimately became (about 1830), but David Mann and William Maver, the auctioneers, were two familiar personages to local bookmen at this time. Mann's low-roofed, first-floor room in Princes Street was the haunt of the students and literati in search of bargains, and this salesman had the reputation of being a wit of some talent, adding spirit to his sallies from the rostrum, according to Dr. Strang, by "frequent libations." Mavor, on the other hand, a round, plump, little man, was a scholarly fellow who could use his pen as well as his tongue, and edited the *Selector* and the *Gleaner*, two Glasgow periodicals to which Tannahill was a regular contributor.



The Paisley poet, Wilson's townsman, was now eight-and-twenty and a frequent visitor to Glasgow, but whether the embryo author of the "Noctes"

came in contact with him is uncertain. At the college, however, Wilson must, of course, have known Sir William Hamilton, his fellow-student, afterwards the distinguished philosopher, and North's unsuccessful opponent for the Chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University in 1820. Lockhart, the future Scott biographer, who likewise concerted with Wilson in the "Noctes," which for so long enlivened the pages of *Blackwood's Magazine* (the *Old Ebony*, as it was familiarly called), was also attending the University, his father being Rev. Dr. Lockhart, minister of College Church.

Wilson's student days fell in a rather picturesque period of Glasgow's progress—what might be called the days of the dandies. The splendid elegants of My Lord Ross's Club had probably passed away, and the dainty figure of Professor Moor in powdered wig, frill, knee-breeches, and the rest, had disappeared from the "Plainstones" in front of the Tontine Buildings. But others had taken their places. Captain Paton, a gallant old soldier, with cocked hat, gold-headed cane, and every elegant appointment from the costumier's, was now the beau of the Plainstones. Wilson knew this picturesque old man, and Lockhart, who had supped and drunk punch with him, wrote a dozen verses of a grotesque lament

when the dressy old warrior had been laid to rest in Ramshorn Kirkyard. One of them ran—

His waistcoat and breeches
Were all cut off the same web,
Of a beautiful snuff colour,
Or a modest, gentle drab;
The blue stripe in his stocking
Round his neat, slim leg did go,
And his ruffles of the cambric fine
They were whiter than the snow.

Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo'.

Robert Carrick, of Braco, Dean of Guild about this time, was another of the city dandies, striding about in his long blue coat, knee-breeches, and silver-buckled shoes, and wearing his hair in the pig-tail fashion of the period. There were still several Virginia merchants, resplendent in their scarlet cloaks, and a little comic relief was introduced into the scene by the presence of "Blind Alick" (Alexander Macdonald), the "Glasgow Homer" as he was called, who stood at the Cross filing his melancholy tunes out of a dilapidated violin, and screeching his improvised verses to the gallants and their ladies in the Trongate. Walter Graham, the keeper of a rum-cellar in Bell's Wynd, nicknamed the "General" on account of his erect, military bearing, is said to have been the last of the dandies, and he persisted in wearing knee-breeches and white stockings "long

after the oldest man in the city had discarded them."

Christopher North himself, however, was not free from a certain affectation of dress, and cut an elegant figure in top-boots and well-fitting coat in these young days. But there were good and sufficient reasons for his display, for the first impression created by Margaret Lindsay had been greatly heightened, and young John Wilson was in love. It was no mere boyish attachment now. It had grown with six years of college companionship until, on the approach of his departure for Oxford, Wilson found his heart captive to the charms of this bright and beautiful girl. In his leisure hours from class work he had wandered along the banks of the river with Margaret by his side, they had sat together under the trees in the College gardens, and had snatched sweet moments away from academic society in Professor Jardine's drawing-room. In his poem "Streams" Wilson has depicted this tender episode in his life, and some thirty-eight poems written at the time of his love affair in a MS. octavo volume he inscribed to Margaret, remarking in the dedication that they "owe any beauty they possess to the delicacy of her feelings and the emotions she has inspired."

Some of his letters on leaving Glasgow in 1803 are as tender in expression as the love-letters of

Burns. In one he speaks of her as "that angel Margaret for whom I would sacrifice anything on earth." And again—

"Oh, what a treasure is a friend like you! How little is real friendship understood! Who could ever conceive the happiness I have felt when with you, or so much as dream the misery I endured when I left you for a long, long time! As long as there is a moon or stars in the firmament will I remember you. . . . Last night I was in heaven. I dreamed that I was sitting in the drawing-room at College Buildings with you alone, as I have often done."

And so on. It reads almost like a page or two from the love story of David and Agnes in "David Copperfield," but it lacked the happy development of Dickens's novel, and "we have words of the past," says Mrs. Gordon, "that make every line of this love passage a tale of sorrow sad enough for tears." Impatient, petulant letters from Oxford seem to have ruffled even the calm of Margaret Lindsay, a slight breach occurred, and a rival to Wilson appeared. Then the great, manly Christopher North fell into despondency, and in despair dozed himself with laudanum. It is an inexplicable story, but it seems as if the young lovers might have got along very well had they been left to their own devices. It is but another instance of the unhappy conflict of old heads and young hearts. Wilson's mother was vehemently

opposed to the match, and declared that she "would die if it happened," and in consequence of this attachment the persistent young Christopher had, at the time of his despondency, become in great measure an alien in his own family. So this love episode ended, and, after 1807, Wilson saw Margaret no more.

To Elleray, on the banks of Lake Windermere, he now betook himself, and strove to forget his disappointment in the society of Southey, Coleridge, and De Quincey—De Quincey with whom he sat up till three or four in the morning to listen to the wondrous eloquence which possessed the "opium eater" at these early hours. Walks in the Lake district, too, with Wordsworth, of whom he had been one of the earliest admirers, may have diverted his thoughts from the lost Margaret. And yet the Lake poet must have recalled to him many incidents of love's young dream, for it was during Wilson's happy days at Glasgow University that he first saw and read Wordsworth's "Lyrical Ballads," and in a long and exquisite letter to the poet dated "Professor Jardine's, College, Glasgow, 24th May, 1802," Wilson had, though only a lad of seventeen, alternately eulogised and criticised the volume. Nor was the freshness and vigour of his letter passed unnoticed by the poet of the lakes.

John Smith & Son, publishers and booksellers in Hutcheson Street, were the first to acknowledge Wilson's own merits as a poet, and on February 20, 1812, they issued his first volume, "The Isle of Palms, and other Poems." It was affectionately dedicated to the author's old teachers, Professors Jardine and Young, and was favourably spoken of by Sir Walter Scott. In Edinburgh the sale of the book was "by no means great, and to a Glasgow success Wilson, curiously enough, seemed indifferent. "Glasgow criticism is not worth regarding," he told Mr. Smith quite frankly, "and a less enterprising set of men than Edinburgh booksellers I never had the misfortune to meet with." For popular opinion, however, Wilson always had a supreme contempt, though nothing exasperated him more than the indifference of the *bourgeoisie* to poets and poetry.

Here is a letter to Hogg in 1815:—

"The Westmoreland peasants think Wordsworth a fool. In Borrowdale, Southey is not known to exist. I met ten men at Hawick who did not think Hogg a poet, and the whole city of Glasgow think me a madman. So much for the voice of the people being the voice of God."

The reception of North's first volume does not seem to have been encouraging to the publishers, for Smith & Son declined to accept the sole risk

of the second, "The City of the Plague," &c., and only accepted joint responsibility with Constable & Longman.

About this time Wilson was often in Glasgow. He had married Jane Penny and settled down quietly at Edinburgh, making frequent visits to Glasgow alike on business and pleasure. There was still Miss Catherine Sym to call upon, and the professors, and the booksellers. In April, 1816, he was tempted to stay in Glasgow to see Edmund Kean as *Zanga* in "The Revenge." Everybody was talking of Kean at the time, and Professor Young, Francis Jeffrey, and other notabilities were lost in admiration of the great tragedian's acting. But "crusty Christopher," as young Alfred Tennyson dubbed him on account of a severe criticism of the future Poet-Laureate's early verses, thought quite otherwise. Kean "acted poorly," he wrote, "and is in every respect inferior to Kemble."

Besides Mr. Sym, the Timothy Tickler of the "Noctes," there also figured in these papers Dr. James Scott, dentist, 7 Miller Street, Glasgow, a fat, jolly, little man described as the "Odontist." Lockhart's joke against him in *Blackwood's* was very funny, for in verses purporting to be the Odontist's he introduced the latter's familiar phrases so dexterously that the guileless little doctor was

actually persuaded that he had written them himself,* and even John Ballantyne, Hogg relates, was convinced of his genius!

Great pranks seem to have been played upon *Blackwood's* in these days. North tells also how a certain Mr. Douglas, of Glasgow, a "disgusting, vulgar, conceited man," being offended by an article in the magazine, went through to Edinburgh to horsewhip Mr. Blackwood. This he did by laying his whip across Blackwood's shoulder and quickly retreating, whereupon the insulted publisher got a whip, and, accompanied by Hogg, followed in pursuit, overtaking the miscreant as he was stepping on the Glasgow coach, and beating him "as hard as he could."



LOCKHART,
From a sketch by himself.

At Edinburgh University perhaps the most brilliant student in Professor Wilson's Moral Philosophy Class was Henry Glassford Bell, a Glasgow Grammar School boy, who became one of North's most

* The jest was even carried so far that the doctor was entertained to a complimentary dinner at Liverpool, and replied to the toast of "The Glorious Odontist" with great formality.

intimate friends. In Edinburgh, North and Bell were thrown much together in their literary pursuits, for it was there that the author of the "Noctes" spent the greater portion of his life. Yet he always looked back upon Glasgow as the scene of his happiest hours, and his eager visits whenever opportunity offered show how he loved up to the very last to recall the old and delightful associations—these nights with Thomas Campbell, with Professors Jardine and Young, with old Mr. and Mrs. Sym, and the never-to-be-forgotten hours with Margaret Lindsay.

"I consider Glasgow College as my mother," he wrote, "and I have almost a son's affection for her. It was there I gathered any ideas I may possess; it was there I entered upon the first pursuits of study that I could fully understand or enjoy; it was there I passed the happiest days of my life."



VIII.—IN TANNAHILL'S TIME.

THE first decade of the century was rather an interesting period in local literary history.

Christopher North was at college, Thomas Campbell was an occasional visitor, Tannahill was the leading poet in the local periodicals, and Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Hogg were among the strangers within our gates. It was likewise a time of cheerful conviviality, and the Anderston Social Club, the Coul Club, and the Hodge-Podge Club—of which Sir John Moore and his father were members—were the scenes of many a night of revelry, which made the rafters

ring. Bohemian gatherings they were, at which minor poets, actors, pressmen, and the like supped, drank, and sang gloriously, and were known in this club-land by knightly and alliterative names, after the manner of Sir Will o' the Wisp, Sir Daniel Dandy-lion, Sir Jupiter Jovis, and so forth.

The Glasgow stage, too, was advancing, for in 1805 the Queen Street theatre was erected (at a cost of £18,500), and the histrionic stars of the time were George Frederick Cooke and Charles Mayne Young. The stage, indeed, was becoming the fashion, and there was a craze for acting, upon which Tannahill remarks in his "epistle" to Barr—"blythe Jamie Barr," of Glasgow, who taught music in his little lodging opposite the Star Inn—questioning whether in his absence he had—

. . . gane to strut upon the stage,
Smit wi' the mania o' the age;
Or, Scotsman like, ha'e tramped abreed,
To yon big town far south the Tweed.

Though neither a participator in the conviviality of Glasgow club life nor an active figure in the literary coterie of his day, Tannahill's association with Glasgow is yet very intimate, for his frequent escapes from the weaver circles of Paisley, their noisy dancing assemblies, and vulgar conceptions of poetry, brought him into contact with several Glasgow publishers and

men of sympathetic literary taste. Such sympathy was necessary to the young weaver poet, and in R. A. Smith and William Stuart he found two singularly congenial spirits. Smith, the music publisher at Paisley Cross, was an old friend of Tannahill's, and composed the music of many of his lyrics; while Stuart, the precentor in the Relief Church, Anderston, was "Will, the guid fallow" of the poet's "Five Friens"—a notable quintette, of which Barr was also a member, who foregathered frequently in the Sun Tavern, Paisley, indulging in song and sentiment till, as the song goes, they were "a' noddin' fu' at e'en." Elsewhere Tannahill says of his musical friends—

When Smith and Stuart lea' this earth,
The gods, in token o' their worth,
Will welcome them at heaven's portals,
The brightest, truest, best o' mortals.

It was these two, according to Barr, who accompanied Hogg on his visit to Tannahill.

In the decade referred to, which brought Tannahill so much about Glasgow, literary periodicals were a feature of the local press. To the *Selector*, the *Gleaner*, and the *Nightingale* he was a regular contributor, and no doubt the young poet enjoyed the acquaintance of Maver, the book auctioneer (editor of the first two), and was a frequent visitor to his

saleroom, where the literati of the city congregated. To the *Nightingale*, printed and published by A. & C. Leslie, 1806, Tannahill contributed some twenty-five songs, including "The Braes o' Gleniffer" and "The Bonnie Woods o' Craigilee," then published for the first time. Tannahill's "Weel o'er the Braes o' Yarrow" likewise found its way into the *Goldfinch*, a volume of the "most admired Scots and English songs," published by J. & M. Robertson, of the Saltmarket. The newspaper press of the time consisted of the *Courant* and the *Advertiser*—the old *Glasgow Advertiser*, which John Mennons had printed and edited at 22 Saltmarket, and which, in 1803, was transformed into the *Glasgow Herald* under the direction of the celebrated Samuel Hunter. The *Herald*, however, was not then a daily; even in the time of George Outram, Hunter's successor, it was only published three times a week; but, finally, under the editorial guidance of James Pagan, it became, in 1859, a daily organ.

Tannahill's acquaintance with actors and musicians was extensive and peculiar. He was passionately fond of the stage, and never missed an opportunity of visiting the old Dunlop Street Theatre or the [then] new playhouse in Queen Street. He knew Archibald Pollock, the comedian, well, and wrote for him a prologue to Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd"

during his management of Paisley Theatre; and William Livingston, another comedian, in a letter to "Dear Bob" speaks of being "impatient for the 'Sodger's Return,'" an interlude or something of the kind which Tannahill had promised to write for him. But Tannahill had no real capacity for dramatic work, though in song-writing he displayed a fine feeling for the harmonies of diction and sentiment which might have been turned to good account in music-drama.

It was by means of the stage that "Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane" became so popular, Jack Shaw, a Scots comedian, getting possession of the score from R. A. Smith, the composer of the melody. Through the offices of Braham,* whose company he joined at the Queen Street Theatre on the occasion of the vocalist's first visit to Glasgow, Shaw speedily found his way to London, where he sang the song with great success, and even had the hardihood to publish it without so much as mentioning the matter to the holder of the copyright. Thereupon Mr. James Steven, the Glasgow music publisher (in whose shop, 35 Wilson Street, Barr had been employed), threatened the miscreant with the law, and the circulation of the song in London was withdrawn.

* The famous operatic vocalist whom Sir Walter Scott described as "a beast of an actor, though an angel of a singer."

All this, of course, gave the lyric a considerable vogue, which was just exactly what Mr. Stevens wanted, for he was a shrewd man of business and knew how to turn such an affair to account. The original of the "flower o' Dunblane"—if ever there was an original in the flesh—has been disputed by at least six damsels of Tannahill's acquaintance, and no



Robert Tannahill.

doubt many a winsome Glasgow maid had flattered herself with the belief that she had sat for the portrait of "charming young Jessie." Jenny Tennant, the poet's betrothed, is, however, now generally accepted as the original, and the fact that ~~she was~~ born in Dunblane, but afterwards came to Paisley with her parents, gives a certain plausibility to her claim.

It was in Tannahill's enthusiastic playgoing days that George Frederick Cooke, the actor, first came to Glasgow, and the weaver poet found himself in a terrible plight with a threadbare coat and empty pockets. But he was not to be deterred from going to the theatre on such an occasion. So to Barr,

his staunch old Glasgow friend, he wrote forthwith (June 30, 1807):—

“If you can oblige me with *twa pund English* on or before next Friday you will do me a favour, as I intend going to Glasgow on Saturday. Cooke, the celebrated tragedian, is just now playing there, and a few of us intend seeing him on Saturday night.”

The piece billed for that evening at Queen Street Theatre was Macklin's “Man of the World,” with Cooke, of course, as Sir Pertinax Macsycophant—a part in which, according to Macready, he “defied competition.”

All the celebrities of Glasgow were there, and they were many at the time. Among these was Alexander Gordon, of Stirling Gordon & Company, West India Merchants—“Picture” Gordon, as he was called—one of the staunchest supporters of the drama as well as a great patron of art. In his big house, situated on the site of the present Royal Bank, Exchange Square, he actually fitted up a miniature theatre for his young play-acting friends; while in the same elegant mansion he was able to house a collection of paintings valued at not less than £30,000. To him the visit of Cooke was an important occasion, and he doubtless saw that eminent actor in his entire répertoire.

Then there was Samuel Hunter—that dour, dear,

delightful old man who for thirty-four years filled the editorial chair of the *Glasgow Herald* with conspicuous ability.

Hunter was the product of an active literary age. He had been at Glasgow College with Francis Jeffrey when Adam Smith was Lord Rector, and when Burns's visits to Glasgow were most frequent; and during his early manhood Sir John Moore, Thomas Campbell, J. G. Lockhart, and Christopher North were familiar names in the *dilettante* society of Glasgow.

Publishing and bookselling was now a very thriving trade in St. Mungo, and among the leading firms were John Smith & Son, Chapman & Lang, Thomas Duncan, Brash & Reid, J. & M. Robertson, and Niven, Napier & Khull. The last-named were the publishers of Stewart's edition of Burns's poems with the suppressed *Clarinda Correspondence* in the appendix. Brash & Reid, too, were doing a thriving business, for Reid, who had shown so much poetic insight in his first encounter with Burns, had himself won a local reputation for his felicitous additions to many popular Scottish songs. His merry rhymes on current topics were among the best skits of the time. For instance, when a certain Mr. Ogle opened a bookseller's shop in Wilson Street with a particularly extensive collection of works on divinity, Reid wrote:—

Ye that would mend your faith and hope
Repair to the new Gospel shop;
Whene'er your faith begins to coggle
Ye'll be set right by Maurice Ogle.

The most interesting event of Tannahill's career is doubtless his meeting with Hogg, and it is especially interesting here because it brought the Ettrick Shepherd to Glasgow. There is a curious lack of consistency, however, in the story of the meeting. In Mr. David Semple's memoir of Tannahill it is related that Barr had been spending a night with the poet at Paisley about the end of March, 1810, and was on the point of leaving for Glasgow next morning when he espied R. A. Smith, Stuart, and three others approaching, whereupon Tannahill, remarking that there was "something in the win'," persuaded Barr to remain. It turned out that one of the three strangers was no less a person than Hogg, and all having adjourned to the "Bourock"—the club-room of the Sun Tavern—a very jovial time was spent.

"Such a congenial meeting," writes Barr, "I never, before beheld. Hogg was enraptured with our company, and it was a treat to see the friendship of the two bards. The contrast of the two was striking; the one lively, healthy, and *off-hand*; the other quiet, delicate, and unassuming. The only regret felt by all was the limitation of time.

"We were convoyed on the road till necessity urged a parting. Soon after Hogg spied an empty coal-cart lolling on the road, and asked me if we might try to get it to drive us in.

"I agreed, and Hogg called out—'My lad, are you going into Glasgow?'

"'Ay, man.'

"'Will you gi'e us a smart drive in, and we'll pay you for't?'

"'O, ay, man.'

"In we went, and at the Half-way House primed him with half-a-mutchkin, and galloped to the key-stane of the Broomielaw Bridge, where we came off,—Hogg saying, 'it would never do to be seen galloping through the streets of Glasgow in a coal-cart.' We hurried on to the Tontine. The coach had waited five minutes and was just starting. When we were observed running it stopped. We shook hands, and in an instant all disappeared in the hollow of the Gallowgate."

Tannahill was much impressed by this meeting with Hogg. "We had a good deal of conversation," he wrote to Mr. James King (April 1, 1810), "over the poets of the day. Hogg tells me he has been in company with Walter Scott, Hector MacNeil, Thomas Campbell, and others of our Scottish Worthies." To the modest, humble Paisley poet the spell of these names was so overpowering that Hogg's good fortune in knowing the originals sounded almost incredible.

Hogg's version of the meeting with Tannahill is very different from that of "blythe Jamie Barr." Dr.

Charles Marshall, of Saltcoats, who, as a teacher at Mount Benger, had lived with Hogg, reproduces the poet's own narrative* in some interesting reminiscences of the Ettrick Shepherd.

"I once travelled all the way," said Hogg, "from Edinburgh to Paisley *allenarly* [solely] to see him. I supposed that when I arrived in Paisley I had only to ask for Tannahill, the poet, but to my astonishment nobody knew who he was. I was sent from one Tannahill to another, and many others, but none of them the object of my search. At last I found him on his loom, one of a long range; he was a swarthy man, bearing no external indication of the intellectual lava tide that slumbered in his soul. I told him my *nom-de-plume*, and I have never forgotten the look of absolute bewilderment with which he regarded me as I told him how far I had just come to look upon him, and that I was now before him with the same feelings as when



James Hogg

Jonson sat in Drummond's classic shade.

During the whole night we sat together, and he sang

* Marshall's version is confirmed to some extent by Motherwell, to whom Hogg seems also to have described his meeting with Tannahill.

many of his choicest melodies. We were accompanied only by one individual [a Mr. Marshall]. . . . In the morning I was obliged to start by coach for Glasgow, on my way home. Being somewhat late, I required to run some distance. Tannahill ran by my side. When about to part he grasped my hand convulsively and burst into tears. I said, 'Hoot, Robert, dinna' tak' things so serious; we shall often meet again; and if you'll no' come to Edinburgh to visit me I'll come back to Paisley to see you.' 'No, Hogg,' he replied, 'this has been the proudest day of my life; but it cannot be —,' and with this sobs choked his utterance. I had scarcely reached Edinburgh before I read in the newspapers an account of his sad end."

Tannahill's end was indeed a very sad one, as sad almost as the tragedy of Chatterton. For several years before his death he had experienced fits of despondency, and in the playhouse had sought to dispel his melancholy. To the *Gleaner* as early as 1806 he had written an "epistle"—"thè first essay of my preaching strain"—to his friend Alexander Borland, a Glasgow weaver. It exhorted Borland to all the virtues, and to watch over his good name, and was a strange, plaintive, moral lecture, in marked contrast to Tannahill's usual bright and hopeful verse. It was to Borland likewise that he wrote his last letter—

"My spirits have been dull and cheerless as winter's gloomiest days. What has the world to do with, or

who cares (take the mass of mankind) for the feelings of others? Am I not right? Happiness attend you."

And, finally, Borland was the last friend he called upon, making a journey to Glasgow for that purpose on May 16, 1810. Borland then noticed that the poet's speech was so incoherent as to suggest mental derangement, and he therefore escorted Tannahill all the way home to Paisley. About three o'clock next morning the poet wandered out of the house, and was never again seen alive, his body being discovered by his two brothers in Candrem Burn.

Every summer, when the sweet-scented hawthorn is white upon Gleniffer Braes, the Tannahill Choir gives a concert in "The Glen" to the honour of the poet's memory. It is a beautiful tribute to the young Paisley weaver, and the thousands who then journey to the braes may realise in some measure the tender beauty of his songs amid those scenes which he loved so well.



IX.—SCENES OF SIR WALTER · SCOTT.

OLDER Glasgow is dotted with landmarks of Sir Walter Scott. From the Cathedral to the Gallowgate, and from Saltmarket to the Stockwell Bridge,* there are endless suggestions of the days of Scott, and the reader of "Rob Roy" can very well fill in with his imagination those pen-pictures of the old city which the poet-novelist committed to his romantic pages.

How often Scott visited Glasgow is not quite clear. Travelling in his day was a very different affair from

* The sketch above is adapted from an old engraving of the first Glasgow bridge erected about 1345, and which, with periodical repairs, stood till as late as 1850.

what prevails in our time, and little Walter was two years old (1773) before a regular stage-coach was run between Glasgow and Edinburgh, which vehicle was then advertised to depart from the Black Bull Inn, Argyle Street, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Nor, indeed, had railway communication been established between the two cities till as late as 1842, nearly ten years after Scott's death.

Lockhart in his splendid biography chronicles only three visits of Scott to Glasgow, but the Great Unknown—for it was not till 1827 that he publicly acknowledged himself the author of the Waverley novels—was in Glasgow over and over again. His legal work necessitated journeys thither to attend the old Court-House in Jail Square, and on these occasions it was Scott's custom to put up at a little hostelry in King Street—the Institution—a quaint, low-roofed building still in existence, but now entering from the Back Wynd just opposite the stage-door of the Britannia Music-Hall. An old-fashioned lamp over the entrance beckons the traveller in search of refreshment, but last year (1896) the licence was withdrawn and the old tap-room closed. It was here that Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Messrs. MacVittie & MacFinn—or at least their prototypes—took off their dram with “the Sheriff,” little suspecting that they were then sitting

for their portraits to the great "Wizard of the North." At the back of the old Institution is still pointed out a huge stone, with an iron ring attached, to which Scott was in the habit of securing his horse while he refreshed himself within with a chop and green peas and a tankard of wine. In these days the Institution was a favourite resort of the professors and students—



Lockhart, no doubt, among the rest — and vied for popularity with the Black Bull (Burns's howff) and the Saracen's Head, to which the visits of Johnson, Boswell, Wordsworth, and Coleridge had given superior distinction. The large silver goblets which used to be shown at the Institution were the gift of the College boys, who were rather fastidious about their drinks,

and liked their ale in silver pints, if you please!

During the earlier visits of Scott, J. G. Lockhart, his future son-in-law and biographer, was a very small boy running about the streets of Glasgow as much as his father (Rev. Dr. John Lockhart of the College Church) would allow him, and picking up

a little knowledge of the three R's in the old Grammar School. Dr. Lockhart was himself a familiar figure among Glasgow *littérateurs*, being a member of the local Literary Society along with William Craig (afterwards Lord Craig, and a cousin of Mrs. M'Lehose, Burns's "Clarinda"), and Professor Hamilton, father of Sir William, the young philosopher. In Glasgow, Lockhart, junr., remained till 1809, when, after three years at the University, where he distinguished himself more perhaps as a caricaturist of the professors than as a scholar, he obtained a Snell Exhibition which took him to Oxford. It was not till 1818, in Edinburgh at the house of Mr. Home Drummond, that Scott met the lad who was to be his Boswell, and when they did, curiously enough the talk turned on one of the most interesting literary men who ever came out of Glasgow University—"Jupiter" Carlyle. "The grandest demi-god I ever saw," was Scott's description of him, "and a clever old carle was he, no doubt, but no more a poet than his precentor."

Though Scott did not apparently make the acquaintance of Lockhart's father during his journeyings to Glasgow on legal business, yet he knew many pleasant people, notably John Smith, the bookseller and publisher; and doubtless he spent an hour in the hospitable back-parlour of the Institution with

John Struthers, the shoemaker, for with his constant readiness to exert his influence on behalf of minor, often *very* minor, poets, Scott had, on the recommendation of his friend Joanna Baillie, induced Constable to publish this worthy old shoemaker's rhymes. The little volume, which included Struthers'

"Poor Man's Sabbath," appeared in 1808, much to the author's delight, and not a little to the pleasure of Scott himself, who thoroughly believed in the old cobbler's genius.

Scott, however, greatly trusted the sagacity of Joanna Baillie, who was one of his favourite



THE OLD INSTITUTION.

correspondents. She had been brought up in Glasgow at the boarding-school of Miss Macdonald, but on her father, Rev. Dr. James Baillie, being appointed a Glasgow professor, the family removed their home from Hamilton to the College Buildings. Joanna's

life in Glasgow was a pleasant one, and her dramatic instinct developed itself at a very early age. When only ten (1772) she was to be found organising wonderful theatrical performances among her school-mates at Miss Macdonald's, and writing the dialogue, too, in her own artless way. Little did she then think that Kemble, Kean, and Mrs. Siddons would act in her plays, and that she would make some name for herself as an author. As a dramatist Joanna Baillie is seldom quoted now, for her plays have had their day; but it is pleasant to think that the brilliant little girl—niece of Dr. William Hunter, the great anatomist, and sister of the distinguished Dr. Matthew Baillie, himself a student of Glasgow College—realised some of the dreams that flitted across her fancy in the old days in High Street. Her strong opinions and infinite good spirits had to the end a fascination for Scott, and he was very proud to exert himself on behalf of her protégé, the Glasgow shoemaker.

On the way back from his tour in the Hebrides Scott was again in Glasgow. His party, which included Erskine, sailed up the Clyde (September 8, 1814) in a yacht as far as Greenock, whence they took steamer to the Broomielaw—"a journey," writes Scott, "which we performed at the rate of about eight miles an hour, and with a smoothness

of motion which probably resembles flying." This was in the days of the "Comet," which once ran ashore at Renfrew, and was floated by a couple of the crew simply stepping into the water and shoving the little vessel off!

It was on arriving in Glasgow at this time that Scott first heard of the death of the lovely Duchess of Buccleuch, a noble lady for whom he entertained a lofty respect and admiration, and it was from Glasgow that he penned his affectionate and sympathetic letter to the Duke. On this occasion Scott was only an hour or two in the city, and after dinner at his favourite hostelry the party rattled off in the old stage-coach to Edinburgh.



Of all Scott's visits to the Western Metropolis, however, that in July, 1817, is the most interesting, for the novelist, then a Clerk of Sessions of eleven years' standing, was very glad to throw aside his wig and gown, and revisit the scenes he was engaged depicting in his forthcoming novel, "Rob Roy." After a tour round the romantic district of Aberfoyle and the whole Macgregor country, Scott, along with

Captain Adam Ferguson, arrived in Glasgow. He at once proceeded to the bookselling shop of his friend John Smith in Hutcheson Street—the same Smith with whom Christopher North had so many dealings, and who was the secretary of the Maitland Club, of which Scott, Lockhart, Carrick, Motherwell, and Strang were members. Smith was naturally delighted to see the novelist, and escorted Scott and Ferguson over the sights of the city. Scott, he tells us, was particularly interested in “the process of *singeing* muslin,” which he witnessed in one of the big manufacturing establishments, and declared enthusiastically to Smith that “the man who imagined this was the Shakespeare of the Wabsters.”

Over the scenes which afterwards figured in “Rob Roy,” John Smith conducted his illustrious visitor. Along the Trongate they went to the Old Wynd, and looked in at the little tavern which afterwards appeared in “Rob Roy” as Luckie Flyter’s hostelry, where Francis Osbaldistone and Andrew Fairservice, his pawky guide, put up on their arrival in Glasgow; where, later, Andrew was found hatching schemes and drinking ale (at his master’s expense) with Mr. Hammergaw, the precentor, and the town-crier; and where poor Mr. Owen was established during Nicol Jarvie’s adventures “ayont Aberfoyle.”

Passing along to the Cross, Smith pointed out the

old Town's House—only the steeple of which is now left standing—and it will be remembered that it was within its dismal walls that Scott laid the scene of the extraordinary exploit that Sunday evening when the Bailie and Mattie, after being detained half an hour, as the worthy magistrate expresses it, “knocking as hard to get into the Tolbooth as onybody else wad to get out o’t,” encountered the rebel Rob Roy and Francis Osbaldistone in Mr. Owen’s cell, and Dougal Creature, the jailor, in full flight to the Highlands. Readers of “Old Mortality” may be reminded that it was here, too, that Claverhouse and Lord Rose established themselves against the attack of the insurgents under Henry Morton, who molested the city both from the Gallowgate and High Street.

Up High Street Scott and party journeyed to the College,* in the gardens of which the quarrel between Francis and Rashleigh was cut short by the Macgregor; and a little higher up, beyond the “Bell o’ the Brae,” is the Cathedral, in the crypt of which Francis encountered Rob for the first time. “Ah! it’s a brave kirk,” as Andrew Fairservice said—“nane o’ yere whigmaleeries and curlewurlies and open-steek hems about it—a’ solid, weel-jointed mason-wark, that will

* Finally demolished in 1887, though the old gateway was re-erected by the late Sir William Pearce at Gilmorehill.”

stand as lang as the warld, keep hands and gun-powther aff it."

It was in the Gallowgate that Messrs. MacVittie and MacFinn were accommodated with a counting-house, and here, too (*vide* "Old Mortality"), Cuddie Headrigg's mother was bestowed with "her auld granin' tittie, Auntie Meg," pending the disturbed state of affairs in and around Tillietudlem. In Saltmarket, of course, Scott located Bailie Nicol Jarvie, who describes himself very faithfully to Mr. Owen: "I am a carefu' man as is weel ken'd, and industrious as the hale town can testify; and I can win my crowns, and keep my crowns, and count my crowns wi' onybody in the Saut Market, or it may be in the Gallowgate,* and I'm a prudent man, as my father the deacon was before me." Scott himself thought a good deal of this character, and while "Roy Roy" was in progress he declared to Constable that he was "sure he would make a hit in a Glasgow weaver whom he would ravel up with Rob."

Until the Glasgow City Improvement Act of 1866 came into force there stood half-way down Saltmarket (No. 71) a four-storey building distinguished as the Original Bailie Nicol Jarvie Tavern. Behind this block was a dilapidated property which tradition pointed

* A sly allusion to Messrs. MacVittie & MacFinn, who had incurred the Bailie's displeasure.

out as the residence Scott chose for the worthy magistrate, and this is most likely, for Rob Roy frequented this particular quarter on his flying visits to Glasgow, and, as the novel shows, enjoyed the friendship of his more law-abiding kinsman in the Saltmarket. When Her Majesty, during her first visit to Glasgow in 1849, asked the literary Sheriff Alison, who conducted her over the city, to point out Nicol Jarvie's house to her as she drove up Saltmarket, this old landmark was described to the young Queen as the habitation assigned to the renowned magistrate of fiction. Here it was that he dined with his worthy father the deacon "at ane o'clock preceesly"; here on a certain afternoon Mr. Francis Osbaldistone and Mr. Owen partook of a bowl of brandy punch compounded by the magistrate's



NICOL JARVIE TAVERN.

own hands ; and here stood the Bailie's much-prized "bed wi' the yellow curtains," and the table covered by the "double-damask cloth wrought by no hand save the deacon's."

Scott was right when he ventured the prophecy that he would make a hit with the Bailie. There is no character in Scottish fiction at all comparable, for rich humour, with this pawky little magistrate. So successful was the novel that 10,000 copies were sold within a fortnight of publication, and in a few weeks the story had been dramatised and staged at Convent Garden Theatre with Macready as Rob and old John Liston as Nicol Jarvie. This was in March, 1818, and about the same time a company of strolling players under Mullender, and another troupe formed by Ryder of Aberdeen, produced the piece in the smaller Scottish towns. On June 10th of the same year a dramatic representation of the novel was first placed upon the Glasgow stage—Mr. W. H. Murray, of Edinburgh, producing the piece during his brief term of management at the old Theatre Royal in Queen Street. Murray himself was the Bailie, and Rob was played by Yates, father of the late Edmund Yates, editor of the *World*. It does not appear that Scott came to Glasgow to see the production in its natural environment, yet it was not presented in Edinburgh till the following year (February 15th, 1819).

Scott, of course, was present at the first Edinburgh representation, and was much interested and delighted. He was a great stickler for details, and, unlike modern playgoers who witness "Rob Roy," dreaded anachronisms like poison. So much concerned was he about Mattie's make-up that he actually left his box in order to remind Mr. Murray that "she must have a mantle and a lanthorn," it being a fact that during the period covered by the drama there were no street lamps in Glasgow, and the lieges had either to carry their bouets (hand lanterns) with them or trust to the fickle glimpses of the moon.

The Bailie of Charles Mackay was the great performance of the Edinburgh production, for he so thoroughly interpreted the niceties of the part that Scott was fairly taken by surprise at the success of his own creation. "He was completely the personage of the drama," Scott declared, "the purse-proud, consequential magistrate, humane and irritable in the same moment, and the true Scotchman in every turn of thought and action." Indeed, it was in proposing the health of this worthy comedian at the Theatrical Fund dinner in Edinburgh (February 23rd, 1827)—at which our own Sheriff Glassford Bell, then a young man, was present—that Scott acknowledged himself the author of the Waverley Novels. Lockhart, however, is wrong in describing Mackay as a Glasgow man.

He was really a native of Edinburgh, as he said in his little speech on taking farewell of the stage, though he latterly lived in Glasgow, and died there in 1857. In Mullender's strolling company, by the way, the Bailie was played by a Glasgow printer who fell in love with Mullender's daughter, gave up the composing stick, and took to the stage.

South of the Saltmarket, celebrated more on account of Scott's singularly felicitous character-sketch of Bailie Nicol Jarvie than for any historical importance attaching to it, was the old Glasgow Bridge, and here Scott laid the scene of the mysterious midnight meeting between Francis Osbaldistone and Rob Roy, the river presenting a "dismal and turbid appearance, partially lighted by a waning and pallid moon." The old bridge is also referred to in "*The Heart of Midlothian*," where Jeanie Deans, on returning to Edinburgh from London under the escort of the Duke of Argyll's groom of the chambers, inquires as the horses' heads are turned away from the only entrance to the city, "you are not for gaun intill Glasgow then?" It was a hard trial for Jeanie to withdraw from the gates of the very city whence she was to reach St. Leonards, her sister, and her old home, but, as it was explained to her, "the disturbances at Glasgow made it improper for His Grace's people to pass through the city."

In July, 1825, Scott left his MS. of the French Revolution in a pretty advanced state, and again visited Glasgow on his way to Belfast. He was accompanied by Anne Scott and Lockhart, and the three rode into Glasgow from Edinburgh in a light open carriage. On the sail down the Firth, Scott sat at dinner beside a certain Bailie Tennant, of



Glasgow, who, as Lockhart tells us, took advantage of Scott's legal distinction as Sheriff and Clerk of Sessions to discuss sundry knotty points of police law. The Bailie was a very pleasant man, well read, well mannered, and jovial in company, and he greatly diverted the novelist with his stories. After dinner he persisted in manufacturing a second bowl of punch, remarking to Scott, with a sly wink, that he "was reckoned a fair hand, though not equal to his father the deacon," and then, proceeding to extol the beverage, he "quoted Sir John Sinclair's 'Code of Health and Longevity' for the case of a gentleman, well known to himself, who lived till ninety, and had been drunk upon it every night for half-a-century." Bailie Tennant seems to have been a veritable Nicol Jarvie himself.

Here the local reminiscences of Scott conclude, but his name and fame will live long in St. Mungo, for he is almost the only novelist who has given our old city a permanent place in the realms of romance. The tall column erected in George Square was the spontaneous expression of homage offered to his memory by every lover of pure and wholesome fiction in Glasgow. That Scott favoured Glasgow himself may be inferred from the fact that he was three times a candidate for the Lord Rectorship of the University—against Sir James Mackintosh, Lord Brougham, and Thomas Campbell—and it was no dishonour to him that he failed to obtain election. What our ancient seat of learning then demanded in its president was accurate scholarship, not distinction in *belles lettres* and wisdom in the ways of men. As Francis Jeffrey put it, “the world at large is Sir Walter Scott’s university,” and no academic honours could have given to his name greater lustre than it wears in the eyes of his countrymen.



X.—A PLAYWRIGHT AND HIS PLAYS.

SHERIDAN KNOWLES was a strolling player before he came to Glasgow. He had dreamed many ambitious things, and done one thing that was magnificent—he had written a tragedy for Kean. But until he settled down quietly as a teacher of elocution in Reid's Court, 169 Trongate, in 1817, he did little dramatic work. Here he found leisure to think out his plays, and he discovered ways and means of meeting the great tragedians of the day, Edmund Kean and William Macready. Kean he had met some four years earlier at Waterford, when both were strolling players,

and indeed it was Kean himself who suggested to Knowles the idea of writing "Virginius"; but to his Glasgow connection is due the meeting with Macready, whose own particular poet he was ultimately to become.

For a year or two, however, Knowles worked away very quietly as a teacher of elocution, and his classes did very well, among his pupils being Miss Maria Elphinstone, who afterwards became his wife, and Mr. James Aitken, the father of Miss Aitken, a popular and leading local actress in her day, and now a pleasant, white-haired old lady living in retirement. So Knowles went on turning out of his Trongate class-rooms* embryo actors and actresses, many of whom were no doubt drawn from the classes of his friend Dr. Chrystal, rector of the Grammar School.

* "Nestor," in his "Rambling Recollections of Glasgow," says that Knowles opened classes for elocution in the summer mornings of 1819 in a hall on the east side of Nelson Street, above the printing office of the *Chronicle* newspaper, then edited by Mr. David Prentice. These classes were numerous attended, among others by "Nestor" himself, who, describing these oratorical matins, says:—"Some fifty grown-up gentlemen were drawn up in military array. Mr. Knowles, like a fugleman, stood in front, repeating line after line with appropriate gestures which rank-and-file had implicitly to imitate, sometimes from man to man, and at other times with one voice and volume. The pupils in platoon often repeated the verses on 'The Battle of Linden' or 'Lord Ullin's Daughter.'"

Knowles had, of course, established himself as a connoisseur on dramatic art, and was a *persona grata* at the theatres, where he met John Tait, the printer and bill inspector, a worthy old man who enjoyed the confidence of Macready, talked of the old plays and the old players with sympathy and with judgment, and knew the Glasgow stage of the period



J. Tait

better than any man of his time. Here, indeed, was the very man for Knowles. Tait would introduce him to Macready; perhaps even say a word for the unacted tragedy of "Virginius" which still lay neglected on Knowles's desk. Of course he would. How young Knowles bounded with delight at the thought

that his play might one day reach Old Drury itself!

Tait was as good as his word, and did speak to Macready, but (shrewd old man!) not till he had seen the piece put upon the stage of the Queen Street Theatre, where it was produced with much success on March 24th, 1820. This was the first representation of the play on any stage, and the

advertisement in the *Glasgow Chronicle*, March 21st, 1820, is worth reproducing:—

NEW TRAGEDY.

Theatre-Royal.

On Friday, 24th March,
Will be presented for the first time a New Tragedy, written
by a Gentleman of this City, called

VIRGINIUS,

With new & splendid Classical Scenery, Dresses, and
Decorations.

On account of the preparations necessary for bringing forward
the New Tragedy, there will be no performance on
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

These being the days when, editorially, a street brawl was regarded as a matter of superior public interest to the production of a great play, Knowles's tragedy was dismissed by the *Chronicle* in an obscure ten-line paragraph without so much as a side heading, it being remarked that "the performers, particularly Mr. Cooper, Mr. Munro, Mr. Aitken, and Miss Lacy, acquitted themselves wonderfully well." No wonder the Glasgow stage was in a backward state when this was the sort of stuff that passed for dramatic criticism. Yet writing of this *première* some years later the little *Emmet* said, "it was a proud night for ourselves—for Glasgow." And a proud night it certainly was for Sheridan Knowles, and scarcely less for honest, hearty John Tait. Tait wrote to Macready straightway commending the piece warmly,

and the great actor in reply asked him to send on the script.

It so happened, Macready relates in his "Reminiscences," that I had undergone the reading of two or three tragedies when late at Glasgow, and it was with consequent distrust that, to oblige a very good friend, I undertook to read this. Tait was to send me the MS. without delay, and I looked forward to my task with no very good will.

It was about three o'clock one day that I was preparing to go out when a parcel arrived containing a letter from Tait and the MS. of "Virginius." After some hesitation I thought it best to get the matter over, to do at once what I had engaged to do, and I sat down determinedly to my work.

The freshness and simplicity of the dialogue fixed my attention. I read on and on, and was soon absorbed in the interest of the story and the passion of its scenes, till, at its close, I found myself in such a state of excitement that for a time I was undecided what step to take. Impulse was in the ascendant, and snatching up a pen I hurriedly wrote, as my agitated feelings prompted, a letter to the author, to me then a perfect stranger.

This communication, however, never reached Knowles. In point of fact, on re-reading the letter, Macready tore the effusive little thing to pieces and wrote another "pointing out some little oversights," &c., which nevertheless was good enough news to fill Knowles with great expectations. "Make any alterations you like," Knowles wrote back in hot

haste, and Macready admired the young playwright for his good sense in having "less of the tenacity of authorship than most writers." Barry Cornwall (otherwise Bryan Proctor) read the play over with Macready the second time, and confirmed the actor's faith in the piece.

Thus convinced of its merits, Macready left for Glasgow by the first coach, and one evening towards the close of the run of "Virginius" he presented himself at the pay-box of the Queen Street Theatre, paid his money, and passed into the familiar play-house unrecognised. Nobody ever guessed that the great actor was in the audience that night, nor was anyone more surprised than Knowles when at the close of the performance Macready presented himself at the stage-door.* The matter was settled now to be sure, and within a month of reading the MS. "Virginius" was produced at Covent Garden (May 17, 1820), the curtain falling, Macready tells us, "amid the most deafening applause of a highly-excited auditory." And in the pit sat Knowles with tears of joy streaming out of his eyes. The tragedy—the work of three months' leisure hours—made Knowles's fame, and it made Macready's also; and

* This incident is related in "Stage Reminiscences" by Old Stager, that being the pseudonym adopted by Mackintosh, the property-man at Queen Street Theatre, who wrote of Kean and Macready from his own personal recollections.

it earned for the author besides a tidy little sum that was then of more service to him than fame, Knowles getting £400 for the 20-nights' run of his play in London, and £100 more the following season.

The success of "Virgilius" determined Knowles in his ambition, and he gave up his leisure from his classes to play-writing.



W C Maccready

This is not to say that his pupils were neglected, for at this time he was busy preparing for the press one or two little booklets which Reid & Henderson, the publishers, issued for him. One of these was a "debate" on the question whether wealth benefited mankind, "spoken by sixteen young gentlemen

of the junior elocution class," and dedicated to Dr. Chrystal; and another was "The Elocutionist: A Collection of Pieces in Prose and Verse Peculiarly adapted to display the Art of Reading." This latter Knowles dedicated to his father, "my first and most accomplished instructor."

Maccready and Knowles had now become close

friends, and the following year (September, 1821) the great actor was in Glasgow spending a couple of days with the young playwright and their mutual friend, old John Tait. Knowles had now acquired a very enviable reputation, and in Glasgow he became one of the most active and public-spirited of men. The *Enquirer* (May 9, 1821), a clever little local fortnightly, writing of Knowles at this time describes him as "a gentleman who has done more to rouse and encourage a literary spirit in Glasgow than any other individual who ever held a public situation."

John Strang, then an energetic young man of twenty-six, devoted to literature and art, was familiar with all the literary lights of the period, and he, too, has something to say of Knowles in "Glasgow and its Clubs," wherein he describes vividly the gatherings in local clubland. The Coul Club was perhaps the most picturesque of its time, for members were obliged to wear "a thick *wauked* coul or nightcap." Once inside the Coul Club and you were in Bohemia. Knowles was, of course, a member, and doubtless he found a coul for the great Macready when he journeyed to Glasgow to discuss Knowles's next tragedy and have a night or two with his old cronies. Besides wearing these couls, every member enjoyed a knightly title, for the the club was prodigal of its honours. Knowles, for instance, was known as Sir Jeremy Jingle,

and he was the life of the club with his speeches, songs, and Irish stories; Andrew Picken, another littérateur, was dignified Sir Bertram Balance; and Ryley, the actor—the white-haired, wrinkled old man, who lived “sixty three steps high” in lodgings at 2 Queen Street—was to be found masquerading as Sir Peter Pension.

What stories old Ryley could tell of the green-room dissensions at old Drury! And how he “prated about George Coleman and Peter Moore, of Lords Yarmouth and Byron, and of members of both Houses giving directions to scene-shifters, tailors, and painters, as if the interest of the nation depended upon their proper fulfilment,” and much more about Mathews and Munden, Kean and Kemble, and so forth! How those old actors did babble over a glass of punch!

Macready's own associations with Glasgow were considerable, for his father had been for a time lessee of the Queen Street Theatre, where he introduced his famous son to the Glasgow public. In these days they occupied lodgings together in Hutcheson Street, close to Smith & Son's publishing establishment. Time after time, however, Macready came to Glasgow quite independent of histrionic engagements, though, as an actor, his connection with the local stage extends over more than thirty-

five years. It was here that he first met the gentle little maiden who afterwards became his wife—Miss Catherine Atkins—a beautiful, fragile creature, who had melted the big actor's heart by her tears when, as a little girl, she came under his rebuke on the stage of the Theatre Royal.

In the year before his marriage (1823) Macready paid a visit to Knowles in Glasgow in connection with his new tragedy "*Caius Gracchus*"—a subject which, the author tells us, was suggested to him by Mr. John Paterson, Bridge Street, to whom he dedicated the play on its publication. Many of Knowles's plays, however, were begun—several indeed completed—in the leisure snatched from his elocution classes in Glasgow, but he put down his ideas as they occurred to him, whether in the class-room, on the stage-coach, or amid the conviviality of the Coul Club. "*Love*" and "*John of Procida*," however, were composed, he tells us, "in the sweet solitudes of Loch Ard."

Excepting his great tragedy, only one of Knowles's plays has really held its place on the stage of to-day, and that is "*The Hunchback*." In July, 1832, when, after an absence of several years in London, he returned to the scene of his early triumphs in Glasgow, it was this new comedy which he brought with him, but it had doubtless been begun before he left the Trongate to seek his fortune as a dramatist

in London. The comedy is familiar to Glasgow playgoers, and, in spite of the attitude of the newer criticism, this story of the hunchback masquerading as his daughter's "guardian," because he mistrusts his paternal influence on account of his deformity, has not yet lost its power of attraction. Artificial it is, like many of the older comedies, but it unfolds a



EDMUND KEAN.

rich vein of humour, some dainty sentiment, and a deal of effective dialogue. Perhaps that is not everything, but it is a great deal; and when Knowles stepped upon the stage of the Dunlop Street Theatre in the character of Master Walter he had a great ovation. Not that Knowles was any great actor. He had dignity and

resource, for though, according to Fanny Kemble, he was always in a state of wild excitement "behind the scenes," he became perfectly cool the instant he set foot upon the stage.

It was as the author of "Virginius" and "The Hunchback" that he was hailed with such enthusiasm, for, so far as the acting was concerned, Macready had made the one and Fanny Kemble the other. Was

she not "dying to play Julia" from the moment Knowles read his comedy to her in the little green-room of Covent Garden Theatre? In Glasgow the comedy was received with singular delight, and the little *Rambler* then spoke of Knowles as "the man who had left our city a few years ago comparatively unknown, returning for a time crowned, in all their richest effect, with the well-earned laurels he had won."

In the beginning of 1838 Knowles was again in Glasgow, this time with Miss Elphinstone, who had now become his wife. Poor girl! her life was a sorrowfully happy one, for Knowles with all his industry, resource, and knowledge of the world seemed quite incapable of stage-managing the little comedy of his own domestic life. He was scarcely ever out of difficulties. It was not till he had been established as curator of Shakespeare's House, Stratford-on-Avon (for the endowment of which post Dickens organised several dramatic performances), that the anxiety of the faithful Maria was relieved; and his closing years were rendered comfortable by a grant of £200 a year from the Civil List, which pension Sir Robert Peel was induced to bestow upon him by a memorial from the merchants of Glasgow, even after the appeal of Jerrold, Planche, Lover, Buckstone, and others had failed.

In his later life, when a curious religious enthusiasm withdrew him from the stage, he yet kept in touch with many of the old spirits of his time. He was a P.M. of St. Mark's Lodge, and in an interesting minute of the annual Masonic Festival held in Glasgow (May 12th, 1853) the following appears:—

During the evening the Brethren enjoyed the rare privilege of listening to the eloquence of Bro. Sheridan Knowles, a person well known throughout the world as the greatest living dramatist, and who, as he himself mentioned, was at one time R.W.M. of St. Mark's Lodge; and the heartfelt and feeling manner in which this worthy man and Brother spoke of the kindnesses he had on more than one occasion received from Brethren who do honour to this city, and their kind, was truly edifying.

Revivals of Knowles's plays are seen from time to time, and to the old playgoer they are extremely interesting. Not long ago, for instance, Miss Fortescue revived "The Love Chase" at the Grand Theatre, Glasgow, and Mr. Wilson Barrett has recently essayed the part of Virginius, a character in which Mr. Osmond Tearle has long held the field. Virginius is, beyond dispute, the strongest of all Knowles's creations. Charles Dillon and G. V. Brooke followed Macready in the part, and it was Macready's favourite *rôle*. In this character he bade farewell to Glasgow (30th September, 1850), and in his reminiscences he speaks pathetically of the closing scene, for the

Dunlop Street Theatre was crowded, and the audience was most unwilling to let him go. Perhaps some thought of the dear, gentle little wife he had met in Glasgow may have crossed his mind as the farewell shouts of the audience rang in his ears, and if that were so the closing lines of *Virginius* must have sounded strangely appropriate—

That voice—that voice—I know that voice !
It minds me of a voice was coupled with it,
And made such music, once to hear it was
Enough to make it ever after be
Remember'd !

And when the curtain had fallen, and the great actor strode across the stage to his dressing-room, there was something pathetic in his murmuring—"Glasgow is ended. Good Glasgow !"

To the very last the actor and the author were fast friends. Macready admired Knowles immensely, and writes effusively about him in his "*Reminiscences*":—

It might almost have been said of him that he "wore his heart upon his sleeve," so unreserved and expansive was he in the expression of his feelings. His rough exterior would better convey the idea of a captain of a Berwick smack than that of a poet who could conceive the virgin purity, the tenderness, and grace of his "*sweet Virginia*." To a sensibility almost womanly and an exuberant flow of boyish spirits he united the most manly sentiments, ready courage, and conscientious rectitude of purpose. The creature of impulse and sensitiveness, his

strong good sense, when brought to bear on his errors of precipitation, would instantly correct them ; but his generous and too-confiding nature would occasionally betray him into embarrassments that tried his patience without adding to his stock of experience.

With all his genius his want of method in his affairs made the greater part of his life a struggle with pecuniary difficulties ; but even under the pinchings of poverty he would seek indemnity from the hard dealings of fortune in the little swarm of children that clustered around him, and would suggest comfort to their mother in the very cause of her anxiety, exclaiming, "Look at them, Maria, are we not rich in these?"



XI.—THIRTY YEARS OF THE STAGE.

THIRTY years of the Glasgow stage! What memories that suggests to the old playgoer—memories of old plays that are seen no more, old players upon whom the curtain has fallen for ever. Few of us will recall personal impressions of Sheridan Knowles's time, of his last appearance on the Glasgow boards, or of the great histrionic names which distinguished that period of dramatic art. Yet there is surely no more interesting passage in the whole history of the local stage than those thirty years (1820-1850) of Knowles's active theatrical life. Any-one who is in the smallest way acquainted with it

will recall the three great managers of the time—Johnstone, Seymour, and Alexander—the keen and eager competition which marked their careers, and the changing and varied fortunes of the old playhouses in Queen Street and Dunlop Street.* These theatres, of course, were the scenes of many a triumph of Kemble, Kean, Macready, Liston, George Frederick Cooke, Charles Mathews, G. V. Brooke, Madame Vestris, Mrs. H. Siddons, Fanny Kemble, and Helen Faucit. Miller's Adelphi, the old wooden theatre on the Green, had the celebrity of putting on its bills such names as Macready, Phelps, Sheridan Knowles, Mackay, and Lloyd; while even Anderson's City Theatre afforded Sims Reeves and Barry Sullivan public appearances in their very early days. And may there not be some among our old actors to-day who even played their first speaking parts upon the stage of Mumford's?

Knowles's time covered a period of great progress in local theatrical history, and stormy as it was, and aimless and chaotic as theatrical effort seemed to be alike on the part of dramatists, actors, and critics, there was yet a great activity which made for progress. A school of local actors was being unconsciously formed—rising young men whose ambition had been

* The sketch over the heading of this chapter gives a front view of the old Theatre-Royal in Dunlop Street.

fired by the triumphs of the old histrions, but whose methods were free from the older conventions. Among these it is only necessary to mention the names of James Aitken, James Anderson, and John Henry Alexander. Aitken, the pupil of Knowles, and a Glasgow divinity student, was, indeed, for long a serious rival to Macready, whose place he filled on many occasions both at Drury Lane (where he acted for five years) and in the provinces. In Glasgow he was a great favourite, and on his *début* (13th February, 1820) at the Theatre-Royal, Queen Street, in the part of Macbeth he was cheered again and again by the brilliant audience, which included all his college masters, Principal Taylor, Professors Jardine, Lockhart, and the rest; the pious and eloquent Dr. Chalmers, and his scarcely less celebrated assistant, Rev. Edward Irving; as well as old Samuel Hunter, and Sheridan Knowles himself, beaming with pride at the success of his young pupil. Aitken had the great power of animating a part and making the words of the author throb with life, and in these old days, when it was more common for the star to have all his own way, Aitken was a source of great irritation to Macready.

Knowles gave Aitken many a chance, and, indeed, it is said, rewrote the part of Icilius in "Virginius" for him—a *rôle* he assumed on the original production

of the tragedy. In Glasgow he likewise appeared in two other of Knowles's plays—Opimius in "Caius Gracchus," and Gesler in "William Tell." His great part, however, was that of Wandering Steenie in "The Rose of Ettrick Vale," and he made some success in "The Warlock of the Glen" and "The Falls of Clyde"—curious old Scottish pieces then in great favour in Glasgow, but now quite forgotten. Locally, Aitken was the prominent Scots actor of his day, and while yet a very young man had played Rob Roy, Bailie Nicol Jarvie, and Rashleigh Osbaldistone, all in "Rob Roy"; the Laird o' Dumbiedykes in "Jeanie Deans"; Edie Ochiltree in "The Antiquary"; and Dandie Dinmont in "Guy Mannering," to say nothing of Macbeth, Macduff, Laertes, and a host of other Shakespearian and popular parts, culminating in the gentle Romeo.

Remember, these were not amateur performances, but *bona-fide* professional appearances, all within the short space of three years from the time he first set foot before the floats of the Theatre Royal, Queen Street. These were the days when actors played any part—when there was no specialised "line," when the juvenile lead of to-day became the heavy man of to-morrow; but, then, these were also the days when experience was more serviceable than art. We moderns have changed all that.

So much for James Aitken. Another of the young trio of that time, James Anderson, was likewise a protégé of Sheridan Knowles, who, while in Glasgow, was the guide, philosopher, and friend of every young aspirant to histrionic fame. This was the same James Anderson who died a couple of years ago at the age of eighty-four,* the sad event being summarily dismissed by most of the newspapers as if he had been but a worthless fellow, unknown to the profession, and without the vestige of a career. And yet James Anderson was one of the worthiest of men, an actor of wit and refinement, and the hero of a life which has not been surpassed in the romance of the stage. His father, himself a Glasgow man and an actor in his time, was, according to Old Stager's "Reminiscences," landlord of the Garrick Hotel in Dunlop Street, just opposite the rival theatres of Seymour and Alexander, and likewise proprietor of a little booth in Greendyke Street. It was in this booth that young James Anderson began his career as an actor. No doubt he was well situated in



JAMES ANDERSON.

* Anderson was born in Glasgow in May, 1811, and died in London, March 3, 1895. He is buried at Kensal Green.

respect of opportunities. He was bound to meet the star actors of the time, for the Garrick Hotel was the resort of "the profession," and his father would not fail to say a good word to his patrons for his boy.

So James became a strolling player, and rapid, indeed, was his advance to fame and fortune. When but twenty-three he was manager of three theatres, and ultimately he joined Macready at Covent Garden (September 30, 1837). Then followed brilliant engagements with Madame Vestris, Phelps, Vandenhoff, and again Macready, until the poor boy who had tripped his little hour upon the boards of his father's shabby booth in Greendyke Street became the manager of Drury Lane itself. The whole thing reads like a romance, but Anderson's life was one of the most romantic on the stage, and would make as pretty a play as Garrick, Kean, Peg Woffington, or Nance Oldfield.

His pet Shakespearian characters were Romeo, Bassanio, and Orlando, and in the lighter comedies he made no small reputation in such jaunty parts as Captain Absolute, Harry Dornton, and Charles Courtly (in the original production of Boucicault's "London Assurance"). He once played Othello, but the "grand manner" to which he was devoted gave a richness to his comedy parts which determined him as a comedian.

That his management of Old Drury was distinguished by the most elaborate and scholarly productions of his time is ample corroboration of the suggestion already made that Anderson belonged to that young Glasgow school of actors who were making for the progress of the stage, and it is not too much to claim for him that he was one of the pioneers of that splendour which nowadays characterises the great productions of the Lyceum, the Haymarket, and the St. James's. Twenty years ago, after many starring tours in America and Australia, and a final appearance on the boards of his old playhouse, Drury Lane, he passed into retirement from which he never emerged, living a quiet, gentle life in a hotel in Covent Garden, and spending an occasional hour in the conviviality of the Garrick Club.

And now he has died almost forgotten—not a reminiscence about him beyond the paltry biographical notice of his death. Yet this man's life was lived among the greatest playwrights and players of his age, and, as Mr. William Archer recently pointed out, "would have been the chronicle of the English stage for this century." How often the actor's fame is forgotten when his name passes out of the playbill! Acting is, after all, an art so fleeting that it cannot be chronicled. It is only a vague impression of it that is retained: the life, the movement, the hundred little

mute expressions of thought and feeling with which the actor enriches the part are lost.

Anderson was in a small way a playwright as well as an actor, though probably "Cloud and Sunshine" and "The Scottish Chief" are the only pieces from his pen that are now remembered, if even they have not been quite forgotten. He was, however, on terms of friendship with the leading dramatists of his time, and was in the original casts of plays by Sheridan Knowles ("John of Procida," "Woman's Wit," and "The Secretary"), Lord Lytton, Douglas Jerrold, Boucicault, and Robert Browning.

Next to Anderson in the young Glasgow trio comes John Henry Alexander, the great actor-manager of Dunlop Street, who, it is not too much to say, made half the history of the Glasgow stage. During his sway in the old Theatre Royal (and even while he managed the "Dominion of Fancy" in Thomson's coachwork, over which the violent Seymour acquired premises for his rival theatre), he was practically Master of the Revels in Glasgow. A great deal of highly-coloured "copy" has been written about the conflicts between Seymour and Alexander, which notoriously exaggerates the unhappy relations then existing between the rival managers, but that these were stormy times is beyond question. Alexander's beginnings, indeed, were made amid very trying

circumstances, for although there was a great and growing theatrical taste, there was also great theatrical disorganisation.

The elder Macready was then (1813) managing the Queen Street Theatre, and to him old John Tait, Knowles's best and staunchest friend, introduced young Alexander as an amateur of considerable promise. And here—on

the same stage on which old Mac. introduced his famous son to Glasgow playgoers—Alexander made his first real professional appearance.*

Whether he had been a member of the old Thespian Club there is no record, but it is very likely, for he was an



John Henry Alexander

enthusiastic amateur, foregathered with the young Bohemians of the What-you-please Club (another theatrical society), and generally showed himself possessed of a soul above the hosiery business to which his uncle, Mr. Proudfoot, attempted to reconcile him in his big establishment at the foot

* For much of the biographical matter concerning Alexander, I am indebted to his son, Mr. George Alexander, the oldest and best informed of Glasgow playgoers.

of Candleriggs. Aitken and Anderson had, at any rate, acted with the young Thespians, who chiefly favoured "Hamlet" and "The Gentle Shepherd," and produced these ambitious plays in a tannery loft in London Street, dignified by the name of "theatre," where they congregated in the early days of the club. The cast of their "Hamlet" (according to Old Stager's "Reminiscences") included Alexander Eadie, bookbinder, as Horatio; John Ferguson, letterpress printer, Polonius; and one Macdonald, a typesetter, as First Gravedigger. These apparently constituted the "literary" element of the club. Later on, however, the Thespians found better quarters, gave some very creditable performances, and in their halcyon days actually included among their number three brilliant youths who were the scenic artists of the club—Horatio Macculloch, Daniel Macnee, and W. L. Leitch.

But to return to Alexander. After his *début* in Glasgow, he left the city to join Mr. W. H. Murray (himself a Glasgow manager for a time), with whom he toured, gaining valuable experience, and playing a curious assortment of parts, such as every legitimate actor in these days was obliged to do. He appeared in several of the original productions in Scotland of the "Waverley" dramas, notably as Dandie Dinmont in "Guy Mannering," and Rashleigh Osbaldistone in

"Rob Roy." But Alexander was ambitious, and, after roughing it on tour, he acquired out of his own earnings playhouses in Edinburgh, Dumfries, and Carlisle, finally, in 1822, obtaining a lease of Thomson's coachwork in Dunlop Street, and turning it into a minor theatre, thus completing his circuit as a proprietor. It was this minor theatre which brought Seymour, then lessee of the Queen Street house, into conflict with Alexander, and the battle-royal between the rival managers continued till Alexander acquired possession of the whole building in Dunlop Street, and, on the burning of the Queen Street playhouse in 1829, had the patent transferred to himself, and erected the famous old Theatre Royal, Dunlop Street, where the best days of the local stage begin.

Alexander's management here was a brilliant one, and, leaving aside the many and wonderful speeches with which he was wont upon very little provocation to regale his audiences, there can be no dispute as to his great services to the drama in Glasgow. No other local manager has done so much to cultivate a taste for dramatic art as did John Henry Alexander. His playbills bristle with the names of Kemble, Kean, Macready, Mathews, Cooke, Liston, and Mackay (the great Bailie Nicol Jarvie). Buckstone, Phelps, and G. V. Brooke were in his old stock companies. Delightful evenings in Dunlop Street, too, must

have been those with Ellen Tree, Fanny Kemble, and Helen Faucit—that charming actress whom old playgoers never weary of extolling, and who, as Lady Theodore Martin, is now enjoying the tranquility of well-merited retirement.

Sheridan Knowles likewise made several appearances here in “The Hunchback,” and while once rehearsing his own play, “The Wife,” in which he acted Julian St. Pierre, he (so the story goes) was suddenly stopped in his part by Alexander, one of the most despotic of stage managers, who exclaimed, much to Knowles’s amazement, “That’s not the author, sir! We’ll take *his* lines, if you please!”* Obviously this was only a piece of Alexander’s fun, and not one of the stock anecdotes, of which the great mass are apocryphal, intended to illustrate the Dunlop Street manager’s peculiarities.

It was at this theatre, too, under Alexander, that Charles Dickens and his Company of London Amateurs gave their interesting performances (July, 1848) on behalf of the fund to establish a curatorship of Shakespeare’s House, Stratford-on-Avon, to which it was intended to appoint Knowles, then in considerable straits.

* This incident was related to me by Mr. Hermann Vezin, who communicated many personal anecdotes of Sheridan Knowles, giving vivid glimpses of his character.

With such names as these was Alexander's management in Glasgow associated, and his long and industrious career prepared the way for the success of Edmund Glover, who succeeded him in 1852. In spite of much that has been written in disparagement of Alexander, he was a man of wonderful resource, of great business capacity, and of strong, resolute will. To him there was no such word as fail. Even in 1831 the little Glasgow *Museum* said of him :—

Now, we love Mr. Alexander because he is determined to make his house pay, and has already succeeded in doing so. He has achieved a greater task than any of his predecessors. Johnstone, Byrne, and Seymour were all ruined by their management ; Macready and Murray both found it a losing concern, and had the sense to abandon it.

And when the end came, and the active restless figure which had so long dominated the old theatre in Dunlop Street had passed away, a real sorrow fell upon local playgoers. It was as if the curtain had fallen for ever upon comedy faces, and tragedy was written large over the door of the playhouse.

Of all the theatrical celebrities who have figured upon the Glasgow stage, Knowles and Alexander alone have been honoured with local memorials. And in the Glasgow Necropolis lie the mortal remains of the two friends and fellow mummers. Monuments mark the

graves of each, and point to their long and honourable careers. And beautiful indeed are the lines by Dr. Hedderwick, which adorn the pedestal of Alexander's tomb:—

Fallen is the curtain—the last scene is o'er,
The favourite actor treads life's stage no more.
Oft lavish plaudits from the crowd he drew,
And laughing eyes confessed his humour true.
Here fond affection rears this sculptured stone
For virtues not enacted but his own—
A constancy unshaken unto death,
A truth unswerving, and a Christian faith.
Who knew him best have cause to mourn him most.
Oh, weep the friend more than the actor lost,
Unnumbered parts he play'd, yet to the end
His best were those of Husband, Father, Friend.

In a silent corner of the same great burial place stands the massive but unpretentious memorial of the distinguished actor-author. On the panels of the pilasters which flank the pedestal are sculptured heads of the noble characters with whom he peopled his plays—*Virginius* and *Virginia*, *Master Walter* and *Julia*, *Emma* and *William Tell*—a mute record of his services to the stage and to dramatic literature. And on the large front panel are the simple words:—
“James Sheridan Knowles. Born 12th May, 1784; died 30th November, 1862.”



XII.—CHALMERS, IRVING, CARLYLE.

FROM 1819 to 1822 was a grave, serious, restless time in Glasgow—a time for solemn words and earnest work—and it is curious to think that with the need there should have been in and about the city in these days such men of might as Dr. Chalmers, Edward Irving, and Thomas Carlyle. It was in 1819 that Chalmers, finding his work retarded by the limitations of the Tron Church, removed to the pastorate of St. John's, where the great preacher and social reformer took the town by storm with his wondrous eloquence, and where for four years his fine figure, with the well-poised head, calm, benevolent face, and keen but kindly eyes, was one of the finest

sights in the city. It was in 1819, too, that Edward Irving, that pious youth and social worker, became Chalmers' assistant at St. John's, and, with his great height, majestic bearing, and long black hair, made a scarcely less striking figure than the Doctor himself. And it was likewise at this period—almost in the very midst of the Radical time, when the streets were filled with soldiers, and life and property were in constant danger—that Thomas Carlyle, the grave, rugged youth from Ecclefechan (he was now twenty-four), was renewing his pleasant companionship with Edward Irving—a companionship which exercised so great an influence on this silent youth who was to do half the thinking of the nation, and of whom John Sterling was to give his dying witness: "Towards England no man has been or done like you."

Carlyle had, to be sure, known Irving before this. They had met at Annan, and Carlyle and he had been teachers together in Kirkcaldy. But, like David Gault and Christopher North, they found great pleasure in walking tours, and it was one of these that first (1817) brought Carlyle to Glasgow. At Greenock *en route* he first saw steamers on the water, "queer little dumpy things, with a red sail to each, and legible name, 'Defiance,' and such-like, bobbing about there, and making continual passages to Glasgow as their business." Carlyle speaks, too, of the "dusty, sunny

Glasgow evening," and of Irving being "very good and jocund-hearted."

It was not, however, till Irving had become Dr. Chalmers' "helper" at St. John's, and had thrown himself heart and soul into the severe social and ministerial work, which the Doctor loved, in the dens of the Saltmarket and Gallowgate, that Carlyle had any occasion to come about Glasgow; but during these three short years he was the young cleric's frequent guest and visitor. And what happy, helpful days these were when the two friends got together in Glasgow! Irving was then



Thomas Carlyle

lodging at 34 Kent Street,* off Gallowgate, with a blythe, good, old lady, who had formerly been his landlady in Kirkcaldy; and Carlyle, in his reminiscences,† gives a delightful picture of these visits:—

"I well remember the first visit and pieces of the others; probably there were three or even four in all, each of them a real holiday to me. By steamer to Bo'ness and then by canal. Skipper of canal boat

* See Illustration on page 175.

† "Reminiscences by Thomas Carlyle," edited by James Anthony Froude.

and two Glasgow scamps of the period, these are figures in the first voyage; very vivid these, the rest utterly out. I think I always went by Bo'ness *so far*, coach the remainder of the road in all subsequent journeys. Irving lived in Kent Street, eastern end of Glasgow, ground floor, tolerably spacious room. I think he sometimes gave me up his bedroom (me the bad sleeper) and went out himself to some friend's house. David Hope (cousin of old Adam's, but much younger, an excellent, guileless man and merchant) was warmly intimate and attached; the like William Graham of Brunswick, Annandale, a still more interesting character, with both of whom I made or renewed acquaintance which turned out to be agreeable or lasting. These two were perhaps Irving's most domestic and practically trusted friends, but he had already many in the better Glasgow circles; and in generous liking and appreciation tended to excess, never to defect, with one and all of them.

“‘Philosophers’ called at Kent Street whom one did not find so extremely philosophical, though all were amiable and of polite and partly religious turn; and in fact these reviews of Glasgow in its streets, in its jolly Christmas dining-rooms and drawing-rooms, were cordial and instructive to me; the solid style of comfort, freedom, and plenty was new to me in that degree. The Tontine (my first evening in Glasgow)

was quite a treat to my rustic eyes ; several hundreds of such fine, clean, opulent, and enviable or amiable-looking good Scotch gentlemen sauntering about in trustful gossip, or solidly reading their newspapers. I remember the shining bald crowns and severe white heads of several, and the feeling, *O fortunatos nimium*, which they generally gave me. Irving was not with me on this occasion ; had probably left me there for some half-hour, and would come to pick me up again when ready.

"We made morning calls together, too, not very many, and found once, I recollect, an exuberant bevy of young ladies which I (silently) took as sample of great and singular privilege in my friend's way of life. Oftenest it was crotchety, speculative, semi-theological, elderly gentlemen whom we met, with curiosity and as yet without weariness on my part, though of course their laughing, chatting daughters would have been better. The Glasgow women of the young lady stamp seemed to me well-



Henry Chalmers

looking, clever enough, good-humoured; but I noticed (for my own behoof and without prompting of any kind) that they were not so *well dressed* as their Edinburgh sisters; some flary, glary, colours too flagrant and ill-assorted, want of harmonious transitions, neatness, and soft Attic art which I now recognised or remembered for the first time."

Of course, it was inevitable that Dr. Chalmers should be the continual topic of conversation. His strong personality impressed itself upon every society he entered. He dominated the pulpit, the social work of the city, and even the drawing-rooms. His sturdy independence exerted itself everywhere. Lockhart, in "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," vividly describes the great impression created by his first sermon in Glasgow, delivered before the Society of the Sons of the Clergy (30th March, 1815), and it is interesting to read of the effect produced on this keen, critical young man, as he sat spell-bound under the eloquence of the great preacher.

Carlyle, too, met Chalmers under varying conditions, once at breakfast "on a cold, vile, smokey morning" in the doctor's own house in Charlotte Street—the street in which Thomas Campbell lived for a time, and where Professor Blackie was born—and again at a rather solemn evening party in a Mr. Parker's fine drawing-room. And always it was

the same—the “great man was truly lovable, truly loved.”

But to Carlyle there was no one in these days like Edward Irving. They were the closest of friends and confidants. It was to Irving that Carlyle, one calm April evening on the Glasgow-Muirkirk highway, committed his feelings on the subject of religion :

“The talk had grown friendlier, and it was just here, as the sun was sinking, Irving actually drew from me by degrees, in the softest manner, the confession that I did not think as he of the Christian religion, and that it was vain for me to expect I ever could or should. This, if this was so, he had pre-engaged to take well of me, like an elder brother, if I would be frank with him. And right loyally he did so, and to the end of life we needed no concealment on that head.”

Truly, no concealments were necessary in these days, and Carlyle was never weary of recalling in his later life the “old sun-shiny visits [to Irving] when Glasgow was headquarters, and everybody was obscure, frank to his feelings, and safe !” Pleasant days they were, too, in the society of Irving’s Glasgow friends—David Hope, that “excellent guileless man and merchant,” and William Graham with his “firm, jocund, affectionate face,” his “fine, well-appointed mansion in St. Vincent Street,” and those choice cigars of his—“the best cigars I almost ever had.” Then there were Mr. and Mrs. Johnstone—that

sweet little lady with her "fine culture, manners, and intellect, one of the smallest voices, and most delicate, gently-smiling figure"—a dainty old-world couple whom Carlyle always remembered with "a kind of pathetic affection."

Too speedily did those happy, helpful days come to an end. They were not much given up to books,

but rather to the study of mankind, aided by frank, fresh friendships. "But for Irving," Carlyle wrote, "I had never known what the communion of man with man means," and in his reminiscences he acknowledges his gratitude very fully:—



Edgar Irving

"Noble Irving! he was the faithful elder brother of my life in those years; generous, wise, beneficent, all his dealings and discourses with me were. . . .

Beyond all other men he was helpful to me when I most needed help."

As a youth, however, there was a strange attraction about Carlyle. Dr. Chalmers himself was won over to the silent, thoughtful lad at their meeting in Glasgow. "He put his chair beside mine," says Carlyle, "in some clear space of floor, and talked

earnestly for a good while on some scheme he had for proving Christianity by its visible fitness for human nature." This, no doubt, was one of the Doctor's literary ventures which brought him into contact with the "certain loquacious, extensive Glasgow publisher" to whom Carlyle elsewhere alludes. Still, Chalmers had little need to be angry about "the villainy of common publishers" so far as his own literary success was concerned. His "Astronomical Discourses"—dashed off at odd moments and in odd places (for Chalmers could write anywhere and at any time, though Irving could not write a line of his sermons with anyone else in the room), ran a very close race with Scott's "Tales of my Landlord" published about the same time.

Chalmers, although no great lover of publishers and the like, showed a singular attachment for Mr. Thomas Smith, the son of the "father" of Glasgow bookselling trade. Young Smith and Chalmers were seldom separate from the day the illustrious preacher came to the city. At Chalmers' "solitary lodgings" in Rottenrow, where he first established himself, and afterwards at his big house in Charlotte Street, Smith was a constant visitor. They walked or rode out daily together, and the two became bound, Dr. Hanna tells us, by "ties of such peculiar strength and tenderness as threw over their brief earthly

intercourse all the air^s of a spiritual romance." Smith's family had interested themselves in Chalmers' election to the Tron Church, and this had brought the youth and the Doctor together; but there is something infinitely beautiful in the attachment which sprang out of this meeting. Chalmers, indeed, was so completely possessed by his affection for the



IRVING^s IN THE PULPIT:
A CARICATURE.

pious lad that he exclaims in his private journal: "O my God, save me from all that is idolatrous in my regard for him!" Much the same might have been said by Carlyle of Irving himself, for their own friendship was as historical as that of Chalmers and his young disciple, or as that of Adam Smith and David Hume had been in the same old city sixty or seventy years before.

A short time before his death Irving visited Carlyle at his home in Chelsea, and the sage gives a pathetic account of their farewell, Carlyle holding the bridle of Irving's horse while he mounted, and watching the great, tall figure ride away until he had "vanished from my eyes for evermore." That was the last they ever saw of each other, for Irving died the following December,

1834. Mrs. Oliphant* describes his last days with a touch of pathos. For a few weeks he was visible about Glasgow, "now appearing against the sunshine of a lonely street, his horse's hoofs echoing slowly along the causeway, his gaunt, gigantic figure rising feebly against the light," still preaching in the Lyceum Room, which his followers had acquired for him, with some of the old power and charm of voice recalling the days of St. John's with Dr. Chalmers. It was a pathetic close to his useful and brilliant life, and it pained Carlyle deeply to see his friend cut off at the age of forty-three, and "except weakness, no disease traceable."

One bleak, chill December day the noble Irving was quietly laid to rest in the Crypt of Glasgow Cathedral, the murmurs of the mourners echoing sadly through the gloomy vaults. Chalmers survived his illustrious assistant by thirteen years, and Carlyle, who was thirty-nine at Irving's death, lived to the ripe old age of eighty-six, being interred, as was his wish, in the little churchyard at Ecclefechan, close by the roadside where as a boy he had often watched the big London stage-coach rumble past on its way to Glasgow.

And of these three men—Irving, Chalmers, and Carlyle—what shall we say? Literary men they were

* In her "Life of Edward Irving."

in a sense, but they were teachers first and men of letters afterwards. Carlyle must be distinguished as the literary figure of the three, his keen, incisive power, great analytical vigour, and resounding periods being among the finest contributions to English literature. Yet we estimate Carlyle always as the thinker, the philosopher, who thundered forth his message to the world in words which fell burning from his pen, just as Chalmers and Irving proclaimed their lofty faith from the pulpits of the Tron Church or St. John's. All three were men of kindred temperament—men to whom life was real and earnest, and who looked upon their fellow-men with an infinite love, an infinite pity. And the burden of their lives was the same, a cry for succour for the forlorn and the shipwrecked as Carlyle has expressed it in the *Everlasting Yea*: "O my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes!"



XIII.—LITERARY LORD RECTORS.

TO tell the story of the Rectorial elections would almost be to write the history of the University, for the office was created with the founding of the College itself, old Bishop Turnbull being established as first Lord Rector in 1450, when the College was situated in a house in Rottenrow called “the auld Pedagogy.” No doubt there are ponderous tomes in the possession of the Senatus chronicling the electoral proceedings of these ancient University men, but as for quite three hundred years the office was invariably filled by venerable clerics—great and good men all of them, but, excepting Zachary Boyd, very

uninteresting—there is no good purpose to be served by exploring the Sleepy Hollow of that far-away time.

Edmund Burke, therefore, was the first great Lord Rector of the University who comes within the span of our active interests. And what a power he was in his time! Gibbon delighted in his oratory, Johnson marvelled at the wisdom of his political philosophy, and a learned critic of our own day, the late Matthew Arnold, has described him as the greatest master of English prose. Yet in 1752 this man was an unsuccessful candidate for the Chair of Logic in Glasgow University. The students, however, retrieved the honour of their *alma mater* by electing him head of the College in his maturer years. Burke considered it a great honour, for Glasgow always had an enviable reputation for its seat of learning. One old Scots writer (James Melville) even goes so far as to say there “was no place in Europe comparable to Glasgow for guid letters during these yeirs”; and evidently this applied in some degree to Burke’s own time, for the great orator at whose speeches in Parliament on American Conciliation and the impeachment of Warren Hastings all the world wondered, broke down during his speech in the old College Hall in High Street* at his Rectorial installation (10th April, 1784),

* See page 187 for view of old College.

and declared that he "was unable to proceed as he had never before addressed so learned an audience." Adam Smith, student, professor, and LL.D. of Glasgow University, was himself so overcome by bashfulness at his own installation three years later that he made no attempt to speak.

Rectorial addresses, however, are a comparatively modern institution, and the credit of introducing them is given to Francis Jeffrey, who was installed in office in 1820. There was some reason, no doubt, for Jeffrey's address. As a student he had spent two happy, useful years—1788-90—at the old College, and he was brimful of gratitude to his brilliant masters.



Adam Smith

"What chiefly exalts and endears this appointment to me," he said, "is that it has been bestowed by the University of Glasgow. It was here that, now more than thirty years ago, I received the earliest and by far the most valuable part of my academical education, and first imbibed that relish and veneration for letters which has cheered and directed the whole course of my after life, and to which, amidst all the distractions of rather too busy an existence, I have never failed to return with fresh and unabated enjoyment."

In glowing terms, too, did Jeffrey allude to his old professors—the celebrated Dr. Reid, the delightful Mr. Millar, the learned and enthusiastic Professor Young, then all dead, and “the most revered, the most justly valued, of all my instructors, Professor Jardine, to whom I owe my taste for letters, and any little literary distinction I may since have been enabled to attain.” Jeffrey was elected to the office for a second term, and in his parting address (15th November, 1822) he referred to the election of his successor, the learned Sir James Mackintosh, over Sir Walter Scott, who had also been a candidate. Both of these men were Jeffrey’s friends, but he was persuaded that the students had chosen the man best fitted for the head of the College—the man of profound and exact scholarship, rather than the cultured and amiable novelist. He, however, paid a glowing tribute to Scott’s attainments, describing them as distinguished from erudition by being “derived far more from the ‘prodigality of nature’ than the successful pursuits of study.”

Sir James Mackintosh made an excellent Lord Rector, as Jeffrey had said, and in his brilliant address to the College (3rd January, 1823) he spoke of the high place it took in the world of science, describing it as “singular that the two most important new sciences discovered in the eighteenth century, the sciences of

Chemistry and Political Economy, were both laid at the same time, within these walls," and were founded by two of the greatest of Glasgow's students and professors—Dr. Joseph Black and Adam Smith; while about the same time Watt, himself a Glasgow student, made his wonderful discoveries in steam propulsion—discoveries which had revolutionised the whole science of engineering.

Scott was exceedingly unfortunate in his candidature for the Rectorship. When he was again brought forward by the students in opposition to Mr. Henry [afterwards Lord] Brougham, the result was a tie, and Sir James Mackintosh gave his casting vote for Brougham, whose address on Learning urged the students to diligence in their studies, for "verily, and indeed, your college days are the most precious of your whole lives." Again Scott was induced to enter the lists for Rectorial honours, but finding that he had been drawn into a contest with Thomas Campbell he very generously withdrew. For three terms in succession Campbell remained Lord Rector, and he was probably the most popular University chief who ever occupied the chair. He was all for setting the students' grievances aright, and he went deep into the college finances, and mastered the intricacies of university law and ordinance with an avidity which amazed the professors. He had made up his mind to

be no mere ornamental Rector, and he was loyal to that resolution. From the first installation day, when, on entering the quadrangle, not being recognised, he was pelted with snow by some students, whom he very promptly pelted in return, he was the favourite of all the college boys, and could not show himself in the garden "without being cheered."

Following Campbell came the Marquis of Lansdowne, the brilliant statesman who at twenty-six had been Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he had much to say in his address of his early recollections of the Glasgow professors, particularly Miller and Young. Then came Lord Cockburn, who had been opposed by Lockhart and Hume, and who in consequence rejoiced exceedingly in his election. He spoke to the students of his "old, and perhaps illiberal, prepossession in favour of our Scottish system of education," and declared that for the post of Lord Rector he would have chosen Glasgow University before all others. His address was an inspiring one to the students. "Everything — literally everything — that you can have or can hope for depends entirely on the use which you make of this precious and irrecoverable hour," were his memorable words; and instancing the result of the brilliant use of their college days made by recent Lord Rectors of Glasgow University, he cited Jeffrey, who "changed the character of the

critical literature of Europe"; Mackintosh, who was "able to break no inglorious spear even with the gigantic Burke";* Brougham, "whose intellectual achievements had no contemporaneous example except the military exploits of Napoleon"; Campbell, who, while a lad among themselves, had achieved immortality as a poet; and Lansdowne, who at the age of twenty-six took "nearly the highest place in the councils of his country."

Surely this was encouragement for the college youths, and if any further stimulus were needed, it would be found in the address of Lord Stanley, the Rector of the following term, who took the same line as Cockburn; and yet again in Sir Robert Peel's installation



FRANCIS JEFFREY.

speech on January 11, 1837. The great statesman's address was interesting, for it was in a small way autobiographical. He cited his own success as an instance of what any boy could do. He had been "the founder of his own fortunes by dint of honest and laborious exertions," which had been crowned

* Lord Cockburn does not seem to have known that Burke himself was a former Lord Rector.

by his Sovereign calling him to the "highest trust which a subject can execute." Was not this, he asked, an evidence that there lay before every student a boundless field of exertion?

"I repeat, with the earnestness of the deepest conviction, that there is a presumption, amounting almost to certainty, that if any one of you will determine to be eminent, in whatever profession you may choose, and will act with unvarying steadiness in pursuance of that determination, you will, if health and strength be given you, infallibly succeed."

Utterances like these are the best justification of the Lord Rectorship, which has come to be a purely ornamental post; but, of course, a great deal can be said for the system of electing as the nominal head of a University a man of lofty attainments whose worth adds new lustre to the office, and whose public life is an example and incentive to every student over whom he presides.

In Sir Robert Peel's time, and for some years afterwards, the students' Peel Club was a great power in the Rectorial elections. In 1838 they returned Sir James Graham, and in 1840 the Marquis of Breadalbane went to the head of the poll with a clear majority over both of his opponents—Sir Astley P. Cooper and the great Duke of Wellington. It is notorious, however, that the Iron Duke had made it

known that he had no desire for office, and consequently he lost the votes of many supporters. Not till 1846, however, was real literary interest again given to the contest, and on this occasion the combatants were Lord John Russell and the venerable Wordsworth. The good, grey poet of the Lakes was in great favour, but it is said that the followers of Lord John insisted on the political significance of the election, and the result was a tie, both candidates having majorities in two nations. Wordsworth, however, had contrived to obtain a majority of twenty-one votes over his opponent's total, and there was some expectation that this would influence the award of the official casting vote. Great was the disappointment, therefore, when Professor Nichol, the vice-rector, after referring to the "regret felt on another occasion that your choice had not fallen upon the illustrious Sir Walter Scott," gave his vote to Lord John Russell. It is to be feared that Lord John did not make a very popular Rector, for he began his term of office by declining to attend the inaugural installation ceremony, so that when he was put up for election a second time he was promptly rejected in favour of Colonel Mure, M.P.

One of the most interesting Rectorial elections ever held in Glasgow was that of 1848, when the choice of the students fell upon Mr. Thomas Babington Macaulay (afterwards Lord Macaulay), poet, essayist,

orator, and historian. There were no limits to his knowledge, as Sydney Smith said of him; he was a "book in breeches." It happened to be the fourth centenary of the University, and Macaulay contrived to give point to his address by presenting a "retrospect of the history and condition of the University at the commencement of each successive century of its existence."

In his diary* he makes some interesting references to the election and its subsequent proceedings.



Macaulay

March 12, 1849.—I called on the Lord Advocate, settled the date of my journey to Glasgow, and consulted him about the plan of my speech. He thought the notion very good—grand, indeed, he said; and I think it is striking and original without being at all

affected or eccentric. I was vexed to hear that there is some thought of giving me the freedom of Glasgow in a gold box. This may make it necessary for me to make a speech on which I had not reckoned. It is strange, even to myself, to find how the horror of public exhibitions grows on me. Having made my way in the world by haranguing, I am now as unwilling to make a speech as any timid stammerer in Great Britain.

Quoted in Sir George Trevelyan's "Life of Macaulay."

In describing the Rectorial address and ceremony afterwards, however, he says, writing on March 21, that "the acclamations were prodigious." Here is the second interesting entry in his diary:—

March 22.—Another eventful and exciting day. I was much annoyed and anxious in consequence of hearing that there were great expectations of a fine oration from me in the Town Hall. I had broken rest, partly from the effect of the bustle which was over, and partly from the apprehension of the bustle which was to come. I turned over a few sentences in my head, but was very ill-satisfied with them. Well or ill-satisfied, however, I was forced to be ready when the Lord Provost called for me. I felt like a man going to be hanged; and, as such a man usually does, plucked up courage to behave with decency. We went to the City Hall, which is a fine room, and was crowded as full as it could hold. Nothing but huzzaing and clapping of hands. The Provost presented me with a handsome box, silver-gilt, containing the freedom of the city, and made a very fair speech on the occasion. I returned thanks with sincere emotion, and, I hope, with propriety. What I said was very well received, and I was vehemently applauded at the close. At half-past two I took flight for Edinburgh, and on arriving drove straight from the station to Craig Crook. I had a pleasant, painful half-hour with Jeffrey—perhaps the last. He was in almost hysterical excitement. His kindness and praise were quite overwhelming. The tears were in the eyes of both of us.

Macaulay in his election had the felicity to obtain

a majority in all four nations into which the College electorate is divided, in which respect he may be classed with such successors in the chair as the Duke of Argyll, Sir E. B. Lytton, the Earl of Elgin, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Bright. Macaulay's immediate successor was the brilliant historian of Europe, Sheriff Alison (afterwards Sir Archibald), who tied with Lord Palmerston, but was returned by the Vice-Rector's casting-vote. In 1854 Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, the novelist-politician, full of genius and eloquence, and as Lady Blessington said, "quite his own character of 'Vivian Grey,'" contested the Rectorship unsuccessfully against the Duke of Argyll. Thomas Carlyle had also been put forward as a candidate, but "his friends finding that there was no chance of his election withdrew him the previous evening."

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (Lord Lytton) succeeded the *Macailein Mor*, easily defeating Lord Stanley in spite of the fact that Sir John Herschell had retired from the contest. The election was peculiarly grateful to Lytton, for he had a great love for Scotland, and in his autobiography declares that his fervent wish on first entering Edinburgh was that he "had some Scottish blood in him." And no doubt, as he stood up to address the Glasgow students at the installation ceremony, the recollection would occur to him of an

adventure he had in the Highlands some thirty years before (at the age of 21), when travelling all the way from Cambridge, mostly on foot, he explored the Falls of Clyde, leaping the crags which young Henry Morton leapt in "Old Mortality" on escaping from Burleigh's Cave; encountering a mysterious stranger who talked of the "Shades," "Cider Cellars," &c., and whom Lytton afterwards met in a thieves' den* in London; and, finally, arriving in Glasgow without a penny left of the £16 he had taken with him.



Lytton Bulwer

"Retracing my steps," he says, "I found myself one day in the streets of Glasgow without a shilling in my pocket. Musing what to do in that dilemma, all of a sudden to my

astonishment I saw my eldest brother walking leisurely towards me. He, too, had been visiting Scotland in a more aristocratic fashion than I—paying visits, &c. He laughed at my penniless condition and lent me all I wanted to continue my travels."

This was a pleasant recollection for the novelist as he spoke to the students, and his sweet, lover-like

* Visited by Lytton for local colour while he was writing "Pelham."

voice must have sounded very gentle in the College Hall. Those who saw him then will recall his fair complexion, light, delicate hair, and the habitual smile that illumined his whole face. He was then fifty, and had written twenty-seven novels.

In 1859 Disraeli was again put forward, but failed to top the Earl of Elgin's poll. Then came Lord Palmerston, the defeat of Mr. Gladstone by Lord Justice-Clerk Inglis (through the Chancellor's vote), and the election the following term of Lord Stanley. Now came Disraeli's third opportunity, and a very exciting and mirthful contest, enlivened by satirical posters and comic election literature, ended in his return by a majority in all four nations over Mr. Ruskin.* It was always the same in Disraeli's career. Failure had no place in his scheme of life, and he knew no rule of conduct save that expressed in his own epigram—"The secret of success is constancy to purpose." His historic maiden speech in the House of Commons (December 7, 1837) gave the keynote to his indomitable character, concluding when he found that the members declined to listen to him—"I will sit down now, but the time *will* come when you will hear me." Curiously enough, Lord Lytton, who heard that speech, was the only man

* Disraeli was the first Lord Rector elected by the Gilmorehill students, the classes being removed thither from High Street in Session 1870-71.

who predicted a great future from that first valiant failure.

A wonderfully active figure was Disraeli's, and his powers of conversation were marvellous. "He talked," says Willis, "like a racehorse approaching the winning-post, every muscle in action. . . . No mystic priest of the corybantes could have worked himself up into a finer frenzy of language." He was not, however, what could be called a brilliant novelist, though his diction was elegant and often luxurious. Nor did he talk much of his books, which he reckoned "juvenile indiscretions," declaring once in Glasgow that he thought "an author who speaks about his own books is almost as bad as a mother who talks about her own children." When Disraeli stood again for the Rectorship in 1874 he had Emerson, the brilliant essayist, for his opponent. A protest was lodged against Emerson's candidature "on the ground of his being an alien,"* but he went to the poll and made a good fight, though he was beaten by Disraeli in all four nations.

At the next election Mr. Froude was a candidate,

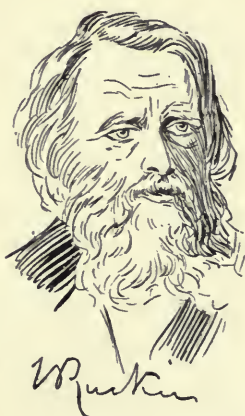
* America was revenged for this innuendo some years later when the witty Mr. Bret Harte, in apologising for his inability to be present at the Glasgow *Herald* centenary gathering (1882) and propose the toast of "The Newspaper Press," stated that he had spent a week or two studying the constitution of the United States in order to discover whether he could, constitutionally, attend such a function!

but on Mr. Gladstone being brought forward he withdrew, and the "Grand Old Man"—he was called the "People's William," however, in 1877—was returned by a great majority over Sir Stafford Northcote. In 1880 Mr. Ruskin was selected against Mr. John Bright—Tennyson, the Poet-Laureate, having declined nomination by the Conservatives and Independents. Curiously enough, a year or two previously Mr. Tennyson (he was not gazetted to a peerage till January, 1884) had been sought as a Liberal candidate, but he could accept no nomination carrying political significance. In the latter case, however, he wrote to Mr. Matthew Fraser that he would gladly accept the honour "if at any time a body of students, bearing no political party name, should wish to nominate me, or if both Liberals and Conservatives should ever happen to agree in foregoing the excitement of a political contest, and in desiring a Lord Rector who would not appear for installation, and who would, in fact, be a mere *roi fainéant*, with nothing but the literary merits you are good enough to appreciate."

The contest between Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Bright was a most exciting one, conducted on the good old student lines, and the poll was the biggest ever recorded. Mr. Ruskin, however, was badly beaten, as he was in the contest the following term by Mr. Henry Fawcett, the Marquis of Bute then also being a candidate ;

and the Ruskinites consoled themselves with the thought that as the Master, Carlyle, had failed to gain support, the disciple, Ruskin, had done exceedingly well.

It was to have been expected, however, that Mr. Ruskin would have done better, for he possessed to a nicety that love of accurate scholarship—in literature, in science, and in art—which had formerly been regarded as indispensable to the equipment of a Lord Rector. Mr. Ruskin's love of Scotland, too, might have been expected to find a warm corner for him in the hearts of the Glasgow students. Everybody who has read "*Præterita*" must remember those joyous young days he describes when as a very small boy he was sent up to



Perth to his aunt's—the pious aunt "who gave me cold mutton on Sunday, which, as I preferred it hot, greatly diminished the influence of the '*Pilgrim's Progress*.' " Many a time even now does the venerable recluse of Brantwood look back on these happy childhood days reminded by his beautiful

home on the banks of Coniston Lake of ~~that~~ little cottage in the fair northern city with "its garden full of gooseberry bushes, sloping down to the Tay, and its door opening to the water which ran past it, clear-brown over the pebbles three or four feet deep; swift-eddyding—an infinite thing for a child to look down into." Elsewhere in a letter to Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who had invited him to Scotland, Ruskin, then only a lad of fourteen or fifteen, wrote from Herne Hill, London, February 13, 1834, regretfully declining the invitation :—

"Yet your offer to me of course is one of the most tempting that could possibly have occurred for many, very many, reasons. I love Scotland, I love the sight and the thought of the blue hills, for among them I have passed some of the happiest days of my short life. . . . The very name of Scotland is sweet to me, for it calls back recollections of times which were exceedingly pleasant, and which can never more return to me."

There is one interesting reference to Glasgow in these recollections of Mr. Ruskin's young days. It concerns his friends Mr. and Mrs. Gray, and illustrates (after the fashion of Cervantes) the evil effects of romance upon business heads. Ruskin is twenty-one at the time :—

"More and more Mr. Gray's devotion to 'Don Quixote' and to my poetry in 'Friendship's Offering' interfered with his business habits. At last it was thought, being

true Scots both of them, they might better prosper over the Border. They went to Glasgow, where Mr. Gray took up some sort of wine business, and read 'Rob Roy' instead of 'Don Quixote.' We went to Glasgow to see them on our Scottish tour, and sorrowfully perceived them to be going downwards, even in their Scottish world."

In his candidature for the Rectorship, Mr. Ruskin was probably persuaded to persevere through his kindly recollections of his old Latin tutor, Dr. Andrews, an excellent man who had distinguished himself as a humanity student in the same University of Glasgow. But it was not to be, and, after his rejection in 1883 for the third time, he sought the suffrages of the students no further.

In 1884, on the death of Mr. Fawcett, Dr. Lushington was returned unopposed — the only occasion, Principal Caird said, on which a Lord Rector had been unanimously elected. Then came the election of the Earl of Lytton, known to literature as "Owen Meredith," the poet, and son of Bulwer Lytton, the novelist; and following Lytton, who won the contest with Lord Rosebery by the Chancellor's casting vote, came Mr. A. J. Balfour, who was succeeded by Sir J. E. Gorst, the first to receive the votes of the ladies of Queen Margaret College now affiliated with the University; and finally, the Lord Rector of to-day, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.



XIV.—A LITERARY LOUNGE.

SIXTY years ago there was a group of young authors—bards, story-tellers, song-writers, and the like—who passed for the wits of the city, and affected in a small way the fine bohemianism of the literary *salons*. They met regularly in the publishing and bookselling house of David Robertson, 188 Trongate, and it was not long before these business premises had become a lounge for the entire literati of Glasgow. Far from resenting the intrusion of these young Bohemians, David Robertson largely encouraged their visits, for he was himself a kindred spirit, in full sympathy with any scheme for disseminating wholesome literature, and proud to have around him so many men of the poetic faculty and temperament.

Here it was that William Motherwell, J. D. Carrick, Alexander Rodger, John Strang, Charles Mackay, and a host of others were wont to congregate, and there, in the midst of the little group, was David Robertson, beaming with joy at the sight of them, talking and laughing and shaking hands as proud of his coterie of friends as ever Madame Ancelot was of Alfred de Vigny, Octave Lacroix, Jenny Sabatier, Madame Rachel, and Alphonse Daudet in her charming *salon* in the Rue Saint Guillaume! For over twenty years this amiable bookseller and publisher gathered the leading literary spirits of St. Mungo around him, and out of these happy gatherings, at which literary projects were suggested and discussed, sprang the idea of compiling the universally known "Whistle Binkie" and "The Laird of Logan."

David Robertson, on coming into Glasgow from Easter Garden Farm, was apprenticed at the age of fifteen (1810) to William Turnbull, the Trongate bookseller. In 1823, however, Turnbull died, and Robertson entered into partnership with Thomas Atkinson, a man of some literary talent who wrote and edited the *Ant*, a local weekly, and contributed largely in the matter of poetry, sketches, &c., to the *Western Luminary* and the *Emmet*. It does not seem that the partnership was mutually agreeable, for in 1830 it was dissolved, and Robertson set up for

himself at 188 Trongate, establishing that Liberty Hall which brought so interesting a group of writers together. Robertson was now thirty-five; Motherwell, born in Glasgow two years after Robertson, had just left the *Paisley Advertiser* to edit the *Glasgow Courier*; and Carrick, having wandered to London and roughed it like many others in the *Hôtel de la Belle Etoile*,

had returned to his native Glasgow, written a notable "Life of Wallace," and got upon the sub-editorial staff of the *Scots Times*, also contributing squibs and *jeux d'esprits* to *The Day*, a journal of literary flavour edited by John Strang.* *The Day*, an eight page paper, was the first daily published in Glasgow, and among Dr.



David Robertson

Strang's contributors were also Motherwell, Henderson, William Miller, Craigie, and Hutcheson; but the venture did not survive the year of its production (1832), and was abandoned after six months' trial. Alexander Rodger, another

* Afterwards City Chamberlain, and an author who, in "Glasgow and its Clubs," has pictured the social life of the old city in vivid and unfading colours.

of the local literary group, was now recovering from the misfortunes which his violent contributions to the political warfare of the time had subjected him, and was assisting old John Tait, the friend of Sheridan Knowles and Macready, in the editing of a Radical weekly called the *Liberator*, from which, however, he was shortly to be transferred (on Tait's death) to the staff of the *Reformer's Gazette*.

Who has not heard of the *Reformer's Gazette* and its doughty editor and champion, Peter Mackenzie? For more than thirty years he was a militant figure in Glasgow journalism. Indeed, from the very first moment he came to Glasgow he showed himself to be a youth of great mental vigour, fighting his way in the office of Æneas Morrison, the lawyer, gravely pursuing his law studies under Professor Davidson at the University, and interesting himself actively in the proceedings of the famous Literary and Commercial Society of which he was a member. After a spell of legal work on his own account, however, he yielded to the popular movement of the Radical time, gave up his law office, and started editor and reformer.

It was a stirring time for the Press in Glasgow when Peter Mackenzie lighted that journalistic firebrand, the *Reformer's Gazette*. Motherwell was editing the Tory *Courier*, the *Chronicle* was Whig, the *Free Press*, *Scots Times*, and, later, the *Argus*, were claimed by the

Liberals, Samuel Hunter was conducting the *Herald* as a neutral organ, and there were also in the field such other newspapers as the *Glasgow Journal*, *Scottish Guardian*, and *Evening Post*, in addition to those run by Dr. Strang and old John Tait. Into this populous centre of journalism Peter Mackenzie projected his *Loyal Reformer's Gazette*, with its valiant Crown and Eagle in the heading, and its sturdy challenge to the enemy, undertaking to "kill at least half a dozen Boroughmongers or Antis (anti-reformers) every week" in redressing the grievances of the people.

With a great flourish of trumpets the doughty warrior set out upon his journalistic adventure on May 7th, 1831, and well do the older citizens remember how he tilted at the veriest political windmills like any knight-errant of La Mancha, with no Sancho Panza to abet him, until his adventures led him into such combats that he ultimately found himself in jail for misdemeanours under the Gagging Acts. For thirty-four years he fought the battle of the Reformers, and everybody who knew Glasgow then knew the white-haired, keen-eyed, old warrior. The active figure of Peter Mackenzie as he went to and from the *Gazette* office was a sight to be seen, and up till the very last he was firm of step and militant of speech, like an old soldier conscious of the battles he had fought. Retiring from active journalistic work in 1865, he still

employed himself in literary pursuits, and ere his death, ten years later, had completed his interesting "Reminiscences of Glasgow and the West of Scotland" and a quaint little book of "Glasgow Characters."

Verily, that was an active time among the lesser literary lights in Glasgow, and the sanctum of David Robertson in Trongate parallels in its own small way the gatherings in the great Johnson days at the Cock Tavern in Fleet Street. But taverns there were in Glasgow, too, where the local literati spent convivial nights with Bacchus and the Muses. The Sun, the hospitalities of which were dispensed by Mrs. Anderson, a jovial, buxom, good-natured creature, was the resort



Peter Mackenzie

of Motherwell, Carrick, and the rest, and there were poets in these days who found the old taverns a fit subject for their humble verses. "W.B.," a frequent contributor to the *Literary Reporter* and the author of "Catherine Clark," wrote often in this strain for the Saltmarket twopenny:—

Loud voices swell from taverns, crowded throng
 With Bacch'nal revellers, a merry "core"—
 The loud, long laugh, the spirit-stirring song
 Is heard amid the universal roar:
 Shakespeare, the Boot, the Sun, and many more
 Famed through the city taverns of repute,
 Where rosy Bacchus pours luxuriant store,
 The nectarous juice of ripe Elysian fruit,
 Fit drink for men to quaff and gods to distribute.

So that the times were merry, and the taverns many and inviting, as may be judged from the fact that the Saracen's Head, the Black Bull, the Boar Head, the Crown and Anchor, and a good many more, which supplied equally "fit drink for men to quaff," are not included in the lines quoted. It is very interesting to peep into some of these convivial gatherings and see the bright spirits who met at the festive board. There, at the head of them all, sat Motherwell, short, stout, and muscular of build, a man of fine poetic sympathies, full of stories about the Ettrick Shepherd, and never more animated in conversation than when engaging his hearers' interest in those old Norse legends which he loved so well. Motherwell was a very considerable personality in Glasgow. His verses, notably "Jeanie Morrison" and "In a Saft Simmer Gloamin'," showed that he possessed no mean poetic gifts, and his joint-editorship with Hogg of an edition of Burns, published by Fullarton & Co., Glasgow, gained him no little celebrity. At Eltrive he had discussed the whole

scheme with Hogg and Fullarton, and in the "Memorials" of Hogg, in which this meeting is recorded, there is a delightful reference to the shepherd poet being "much bored by brother bards sending him their lucubrations, printed and manuscript, for his opinion and admiration." And what do you think?—one of those very bards was John Stuart Blackie, then a young man, who called with a letter of introduction from Blackwood and a translation of Goethe's "Faust" in his pocket!

At these convivial gatherings of which Motherwell was the head, were also J. D. Carrick, who sang a good song and kept the table in a roar by his humorous recitations; Alexander Rodger, a kindred spirit, who knew the depth of the Sun Tavern punch-bowl, but was a fellow of infinite good humour with a fine ear for the jingle of rhyme; William Miller, "the laureate of the nursery," as Robert Buchanan has appropriately called him, whose children songs will never die save with the Scottish language itself, and whose "Wee Willie Winkie," heard murmured by the soldiers' wives around the camp-fires in India, gave the title to Rudyard Kipling's best volume of child stories; and David Robertson, the "John Murray of Glasgow," who did more for local literature than has perhaps yet been realised, by collecting into volume form those utterances of minor poets which Jeffrey

found to contain "more touches of genuine pathos, more felicities of idiomatic expression, more happy poetical images, and, above all, more sweet and engaging pictures of what is peculiar in the depth, softness, and thoughtfulness of our Scotch domestic affections, than I have met within anything like the same compass since the days of Burns." W. A. Foster,

the friend of Hogg, latterly joined this coterie, and William Kennedy, Andrew Henderson, Dr. Strang, and Dr. Charles Mackay were likewise in the charmed circle of David Robertson's friendship.



D. Moshewell

In and about Glasgow during Robertson's time, however, there were many other men who dabbled in literature. William Glen, the

author of "O, Wae's me for Prince Charlie" and other Jacobite ditties, had been a member of the old Coul Club, but he latterly got into poverty and "took severely to the bottle." George Donald wrote some dainty and touching nursery poems, but, it is sad to say, neglected his own wife and children shamefully, and ruined himself with drink. It was,

however, a time of stiff drinking. One of J. D. Carrick's songs suggests as much—

Some rail against drinking, and say 'tis a sin
To tipple the juice of the vine;
But as 'tis allowed that we all have our faults,
I wish no other fault may be mine.
But, mark me, good fellows, I don't mean to say
That always to tipple is right;
But 'tis wisdom to drown the dull cares of the day
In a bowl with old cronies at night.

Other "Whistle-Binkians" were Edward Pinkerton, John Graeme, Captain Gray, Alexander Fisher, and John Howie. Nor were Robert Gilfillan, Tannahill, and James Ballantyne strangers to the city. Then there were William Bennet, editor of the *Glasgow Free Press* and *Bennet's Glasgow Magazine*; Robert Macnish, known as the "Modern Pythagorean," whose dissertations on the "Anatomy of Drunkenness" and "The Philosophy of Sleep" were peculiarly appropriate to his time; John Blackie, jun. (of the publishing firm of Blackie & Son), who established the *Scottish Guardian*, the first religious newspaper ever published in Scotland, and eventually became Provost of Glasgow; and Hugh Macdonald, whose rhymes and reminiscences are still pleasantly remembered by the older generation who can recall the ready wit and roving disposition of the "Rambling Reporter."

Such is this group of minor bards and the like who flourished in Glasgow in the days of David Robertson. One by one they passed away from those literary levees where publisher and author had long been wont to discuss their plans in genial companionship. Carrick was the first to lay down his pen, and a few months later a sad-hearted little group followed the remains of Motherwell to their last resting-place in the Necropolis. In 1846 Rodger was laid to rest in a picturesque spot of the same quiet burying-ground, and the light of these literary gatherings was extinguished for ever eight years later by the death of David Robertson.

A pleasant time it is to look back upon, for in that little circle the literary instinct was keen, and the Bohemian spirit paramount. But the Literary Lounge is now only a memory.



XV.—DE QUINCEY IN ROTTENROW.

HIGH up in Rottenrow, in a three-storey building with a grimy front and a white-washed gable, once lived the brilliant essayist, Thomas de Quincey. The house, No. 112, is still standing, and rooms on the top flat, just beneath the east-end attic window, have been identified as the old lodgings of the opium-eater. From this watch-tower, in those lucid morning hours when the effects of the opium had been exhausted, De Quincey used, like Teufelsdröckh, to look out upon the sleeping world, and never was a prospect more full of reflections for the

author of "Our Ladies of Sorrow" than that glimpse down the Rottenrow towards the silent Necropolis.

Curiously enough, it was only in those early hours after midnight that De Quincey awoke to real consciousness of his surroundings, and it is quite certain that if Mrs. Tosh, his landlady, happened to be sitting up late she would be read a very fine lecture on some abstruse subject which the poor creature did not understand any more than she did the eccentric little man who had become her lodger. And what an eccentric little man he was! In one sense he was a perfect Bohemian of the old school; he dressed as shabbily and negligently as ever he could. No coat was too threadbare for him to wear, and, quite indifferent to all appearance, he simply wrapt about him the first garment he could lay his hands upon. There he sat *en déshabillé* in Mrs. Tosh's front parlour, a strange, gentle, little soul, like poor Philoxene in Daudet's "Trente ans à Paris," with books and papers piled up around him in infinite confusion, and his untouched breakfast on the table. It was a harmless fancy of his that his books should not be disturbed once they had been set down in a corner, and in following out this eccentricity he had actually paid rent for several years for a lodging in Renfield Street, where he had books stowed away in a fashion which defied discovery.

A curious picture he made among his books. Carlyle once saw him in Edinburgh, after his severe criticism of "Wilhelm Meister," and there is a drop of gall in the ink with which he penned this portrait: "One of the smallest man-figures I ever saw; shaped like a pair of tongs, and hardly above five feet in all. When he sate you would have taken him, by candlelight, for the beautifullest little child, blue-eyed, sparkling face, had there not been a something, too, which said '*Eccovi*—this child has been in hell.'" No doubt that "something" was the effect produced by those maddening Asiatic dreams wherein his fearful Malay enemy prevailed, and from which the gentle opium-eater awoke shuddering and horror-stricken.

De Quincey, it seems, was a good deal about Glasgow. The late Mr. Colin Rae-Brown has written of his life during 1846-47 in Rottenrow,* but Mr. H. A. Page, in his biography of the essayist, relates that he was much in Glasgow between March, 1841, and June, 1843, on account of his great interest at that time in astronomical researches. Professor J. P. Nichol, who then occupied the Chair of Astronomy

* To Mr. Rae-Brown I am indebted for the identification of the house in Rottenrow, of which a sketch appears over the title of this chapter. Mrs. Baird Smith and Miss De Quincey, the essayist's daughters, were also at some pains on my behalf to establish the identity of the lodging.

at the University, was a warm friend of De Quincey, and with him he lodged for a time in the professorial quarters at the Old College, afterwards taking apartments in High Street, opposite the College, and likewise acquiring rooms at 79 Renfield Street, which he seldom occupied, but where he stowed away his books, forgetting all about their existence until reminded each rent-day of their whereabouts. For four or five years, indeed, he seldom entered the domains of his Renfield Street landlady, but continued to pay his rent regularly for the use of a few dusty book-shelves. This was a curious whim of De Quincey's, and, though it was a perfectly harmless one, he carried it to such excess that at one time he was maintaining four different lodgings within a stone's throw of each other in Edinburgh!

In Glasgow De Quincey's two familiars were Nichol and Lushington, the professors respectively of Astronomy and Greek, and though De Quincey was not the possessor of great social qualities, being for the most part, through the use of narcotics, moody and uncommunicative, many visits were exchanged between these three friends, and many wonderful talks no doubt engaged in when in the early hours of morning his brilliant powers of conversation obtained full play. It was the time of the talkers, however, and De Quincey's contemporaries in literature

were fluent of speech and accurate in learning. Coleridge, Macaulay, Rogers, Sydney Smith, and Douglas Jerrold were all great talkers, but De Quincey in his brilliant moments had a wonderful charm over them all. Even Carlyle spoke of him as having the "finest, silver-toned, low voice," and it must have sounded softly enough in those still morning hours.

One can readily fancy De Quincey entertaining his friends Nichol and Lushington in Mrs. Tosh's front parlour, and lecturing his long-suffering landlady in rounded periods on how the mutton ought really to have been cooked for dinner. Readers of Christopher North's memoirs will remember how De Quincey talked the Professor's cook almost out of her mind.



DE QUINCEY.

"Madame," he said, assuming the grand manner, "owing to dyspepsia affecting my system, the possibility is that additional derangement of the stomach might take place, and consequences incalculably distressing arise—so much so, indeed, as to increase nervous irritations and prevent me from attending to matters of overwhelming importance—if you do not remember to cut the mutton

in a diagonal rather than a longitudinal form." Poor cook! he could not have frightened her more with his fearful Malay.

While living in Rottenrow, Mr. Colin Rae-Brown tells us,* De Quincey wrote a great deal for *Tait's Magazine*, which had just then (December, 1846) been transferred from Edinburgh to Glasgow, the proprietors of the *North British Daily Mail* having acquired possession of it.† The *Mail* office was then in Dunlop Street, and from the heights of Rottenrow De Quincey dropped his thunderbolts into the editorial room of *Tait's*. Mr. Rae-Brown was then a young man of twenty-six, and his connection with the *Mail* brought him frequently into contact with the opium-eater, whom he remembered as a man of magnetic personality in spite of his drugs and dreams. "No more lovable man, no man with greater powers of attraction," he wrote, "ever walked God's earth. To see and know was to love and

* *Universal Review* for November, 1889.

† The first issue of the *North British Daily Mail* appeared on April 14, 1847, and for rapidity and delivery the English newspapers and correspondence were conveyed from Carlisle to Glasgow by special horsemen, who never failed to give the old stage-coach a long lead in the race northwards. The *Glasgow Herald* was not published as a daily till 1859. The first Glasgow daily was, of course, *The Day*, edited by Dr. Strang, and abandoned in the year of its birth (1832) after a six months' run.

venerate him. Humble to a fault, and simple as a child, there was nevertheless a true nobility of nature, and a more than merely polished refinement interwoven with his every act and expression."

At the Rose Tavern in Argyle Street, not far from the offices of *Tait's*, De Quincey used now and then to lunch on a Wednesday, and it was a droll sight to see the eccentric little bookworm hobbling along Argyle Street on a winter's day dressed much as Hill Burton once saw him at an Edinburgh dinner party in "a boy's duffle greatcoat, very threadbare, with a hole in it, and buttoned tight to the chin, a pair of inky trousers, and on his feet list shoes covered with snow."

Such an eccentric little man could not fail to be known as a character quite independent of his brilliant literary talents, and no doubt some faint recollection of the essayist may be retained by such men as "A. K. H. B.," Principals Caird, Rainy, and Douglas, and the host of others celebrated in varied walks of life who were then students at the Old College. "A. K. H. B."—or, to give him his full share of the alphabet, Andrew Kennedy Hutchison Boyd, the recluse of St. Andrews—was a Glasgow student for no fewer than six sessions, from 1844 to 1850, his father being then a city clergyman. At college "A. K. H. B." was known by the nickname of the "Moon," but

there was no moonshine about the lad, for he began his university career by capturing the second prize in the class of Professor Robert Buchanan, that delightful logic master whose memory is one of the treasured recollections of his surviving students. Dear old "Logic Bob!" He was himself an author of some repute, and in his leisure from class work he sought the arbours of Melpomene, and murmured his sad musings in her ear. His attachment to the tragic Muse, indeed, led him to publish two volumes of Scottish dramas, but they are ill suited to the stage, and have consequently never passed beyond the precincts of the book-shelves.*

Curiously enough, among Buchanan's students of an earlier date was Tom Taylor, the dramatist, who matriculated in November, 1832, and spent four sessions at the Old College, where he distinguished himself greatly in Greek and Latin. There is the impress of the scholar on his plays, which always possessed the literary quality in a large degree, and it is safe to assume that his theatrical bent was in some measure due to the influence of his old logic professor. "Still Waters Run Deep," "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," "Lady Clancarty," and "Joan of Arc" are

* One of them, however, the tragedy of "Wallace," suggested the subject of an effective play by Mr. Ernest Stevens, lessee of the Grand Theatre, Glasgow, produced there under the title of "Scots Wha Hae," October 15, 1895.

his best-known plays, and one of his most successful is "Masks and Faces," written in collaboration with Charles Reade, whose dramatic story "Peg Woffington" is based upon the incidents of that comedy.

No doubt De Quincey had also met "Logic Bob" during his stay with Professor Nichol at the College, but many details of the English opium-eater's life in Glasgow are now beyond recall, and, for that matter, are just as well so. The sordid effects of the opium must have thoroughly unnerved the man in the end. Latterly, indeed, he was to be found consuming 8,000 drops of laudanum a-day, a quantity sufficient to fill seven wine glasses. No wonder he saw that terrible Malay of his dreams so often, and thought himself haunted by the spectre.

Recently Mr. James Bertram, who was employed in the office of *Tait's Magazine* before it was transferred to the proprietors of the *Mail* and placed under the editorial guidance of Mr. George Troup, of Glasgow, suggested that there must be a good many De Quincey MSS. still in existence somewhere, since he knew, as a matter of fact, that quite a number which have never been published were in the possession of Mr. Tait at the time the magazine changed hands. Whether the MSS. went to Mr. Troup or were retained by Mr. Tait it is impossible now to say, but a De Quincey find would be exceedingly interesting

and valuable at the present moment. Dr. Japp's publication of certain of De Quincey's posthumous works, a year or so ago, showed that some of the missing manuscripts had been recovered, but, of course, no end of the opium-eater's "copy" must have been swept away by his landladies—Mrs. Tosh no less than the others—for his careless habit* of jotting down notes, ideas, and even literary schemes on any odd bits of paper that lay near him at the time, and then leaving them scattered about the floor, must account for the loss of much that would have been valuable to the collector of De Quinciana. Many a page intended for *Tait* or *Blackwood* doubtless went astray after this fashion, and thus we may have lost infinite glimpses of the strange moods, curious images, and rich and fanciful thoughts of the gentle opium-eater.

* Mr. J. R. Findlay, in his "Personal Recollection of Thomas de Quincey," relates how on removing from Glasgow the essayist left behind him some valuable books and manuscripts for the safety of which he was concerned, and through Wilson (Christopher North) he got an introduction to a Glasgow bookseller who took the property into his custody for safety. Some years later, however, when De Quincey wished to obtain possession of these he had forgotten the name and address of the bookseller, and was in a worse plight than ever. Eventually they were restored to him by the aid of Mr. James Hogg, the editor of his "Uncollected Writings."



XVI.—IN DICKENS'S DAYS.

FOR those whose backward glances can take in the scene of Dickens's triumphs in Glasgow there must be many pleasant recollections. One dull, grey afternoon away back in the fifties will recall an immense gathering in the City Hall waiting breathless and expectant for the appearance of the great novelist who had given the world such congenial friends as Pickwick and Sam Weller, Mr. Vincent Crummles and the Cheeryble Brothers, Mark Tapley and Tom Pinch, and none the less dear old Betsy Trotwood and the gentle but impecunious Micawber. The creaking of the artist's door, a movement in the front benches, and, amid tremendous cheering, Charles

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Dickens stepped upon the platform. What a scene it was! It brought the tears into Dickens's eyes, for his heart was very full, and he could scarcely realise what it all meant as he stood there bowing and smiling while the cheering was renewed again and again.

Then came the readings, humorous, pathetic, tragic—"a whole theatre," as Carlyle said—in which Dickens's wonderful mimic voice lifted the audience out of their environment and supplied to the imagination all the illusion of the stage. For the moment it was not Dickens they saw, but poor Paul Dombey in his little bed, or Sergeant Buzfuz humbugging the jury, or Scrooge trembling before Marley's Ghost. Such was the magic of Dickens's voice.

It was in December, 1847, that Dickens made his first public appearance in Glasgow, for, on his visit to Scotland six years before, he had been obliged to decline an offer of a banquet in the city. When he did come in 1847, however, it was to attend a function connected with the opening of the old Athenæum in Ingram Street.* The citizens had displayed great interest in the institution, and Sir Archibald Alison, the author of many essays, biographies, and a notable "History of Europe," was one of the active spirits

* A sketch of the building, now demolished to make way for the extension of the General Post Office, is given over the heading of this chapter.

in its promotion, as he was in all the local literary movements of the time. Sir Archibald was then Sheriff of Lanarkshire, and his love of literature, art, and the drama made him an excellent host when celebrities in these spheres of action visited Glasgow. Miss Helen Faucit, the great actress, had been his frequent guest, and he was now delighted to show his unbounded hospitality to Charles Dickens. . At Possil House, indeed, Dickens was banqueted right royally, and at the great social gathering in the City Hall in connection with the opening of the Athenæum, they sat together on the platform. Dickens, who presided, was in excellent spirits. He was delighted with the idea of the Ladies' Bazaar, which was being got up, under the patronage of the Queen, for the purpose of augmenting the library of the Athenæum, and the romantic associations which the books would always have with their fair donors suggested to him some sprightly remarks.



Charles Dickens

"I can imagine," he said, "how, in fact, from these fanciful associations, some fair Glasgow widow may be

taken for the remoter one whom Sir Roger de Coverley could not forget : I can imagine how Sophia's muff may be seen and loved, but not by Tom Jones, going down the High Street on any winter day ; or I can imagine the student finding in every fair form the exact counterpart of the Glasgow Athenæum, and taking into consideration the history of Europe without the consent of Sheriff Alison."

At this slight reference to the historian, Forster tells us, no one laughed so loudly and heartily as the Sheriff himself, and, as they drove out to Possil House that evening, they chuckled over the incident again and again. It was a pleasant time for Dickens, and the Sheriff's cordiality and homeliness delighted him.

"Alison lives in style," he wrote to Forster, "in a handsome country house out of Glasgow, and is a capital fellow, with an agreeable wife, nice little daughter, cheerful niece, all things pleasant in his household. I went over the prison and lunatic asylum with him yesterday [December 29] ; at the Lord Provost's had gorgeous State lunch with the Town Council ; and was entertained at a great dinner-party at night. Unbounded hospitality and enthoozymoozy the order of the day, and I have never been more heartily received anywhere, or enjoyed myself more completely."

Professor Aytoun, himself an author of repute, was present at the social gathering just described, and the Chief Magistrate referred to, Provost Hastie, was also one of the speakers.

In the following summer (1848) Dickens was again in Glasgow with Mark Lemon, Cruikshank, Forster, and some others engaged in a series of amateur theatrical entertainments got up by the novelist for the endowment of a curatorship at Shakespeare's House, Stratford-on-Avon, to be held by poor Sheridan Knowles, who had fallen on evil days, and was in a luckless condition of impecuniosity. Two performances were given in Glasgow, the first being for the purpose stated, and the second on behalf of the local unemployed who were in some distress at the time. Appropriately enough "The Merry Wives of Windsor" was chosen for production in aid of the Shakespeare House Fund, and what a cast that was. Mark Lemon, the genial editor of *Punch*, strutted about as the great fat effigy of Falstaff; John Forster, Dickens's Boswell, personated Mr. Ford; George Cruikshank, the famous caricaturist, played Pistol, and very consistently made his exits *like a shot*; Mrs. Cowden-Clarke, whose "Recollections" are full of delightful Dickensiana, was Dame Quickly; and there was Dickens himself, marvellously made up as Master Slender, though Justice Shallow was the character he usually took in "The Merry Wives." This jovial comedy was followed by a little piece called "Animal Magnetism," with Dickens as the Doctor, Lemon as La Fleur, and Cruikshank as Jeffrey.

Who that was present in the old Dunlop Street Theatre on that notable 18th July, 1848, could ever forget it! The *Glasgow Courier* of that day describes the scene of enthusiasm which greeted the actors as they took their call at the fall of the curtain, crossing the stage "amid showers of bouquets and the



rapturous plaudits of the audience." On the second night (July 20) the pieces produced were "Used Up" (Boucicault's adaptation of "L'Homme Blasé") and a condensed version of Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour," the former of which, Dickens declared, "fairly turned the head of Glasgow." These two evening performances realised the creditable sum of £681 17s. 8d.—by far the biggest receipts taken during Dickens's tour.

But Dickens was not the only novelist on tour in these days. In 1851 and again in 1856 his great rival in fiction, the immortal Thackeray, was "strolling" as a lecturer, and to Glasgow, too, he came with his lectures on the humorists and the Four Georges.

His infinite wit delighted his audiences everywhere, and if he did not create that popular *furor* which Dickens excited, it was because satire on the platform was in these days less effective than caricature. In Glasgow, however, Thackeray won the hearts of what might be called the "smart" society—the people who knew what o'clock it was and liked to be five minutes fast—and his tall aristocratic figure, fine grey head, and pleasant, spectacled face were the admiration of the ladies. His delicate but winning voice suited his brilliant essays admirably, and he gave one the impression of an exquisite talker rather than a lecturer.

Many stories, entertaining and otherwise, are told of Thackeray's sojourn in Glasgow. Dr. Hedderwick in "Backward Glances," those happy glimpses of his young days, gives his impressions of the novelist during one of these lecturing visits; and not long ago Dr. Donald Macleod enlivened the pages of *Good Words* with some sprightly recollections of Thackeray. Sheriff Glassford Bell, one of Glasgow's own literary celebrities, used to tell a story illustrative of the novelist's fine vein of satire even in ordinary conversation. It was at Bell's first meeting with him, when he came to lecture on the "Four Georges" at the Athenæum, and it appears that Thackeray had disputed the terms of his engagement, regarding himself

as having been shabbily used by the Athenæum Directors.* Fearful that the novelist might have his revenge upon somebody, Mr. Walter Buchanan, M.P., suggested good-humouredly to Thackeray that he should not attack Queen Mary in Glasgow as he had done in Edinburgh, Bell being a great champion of the Scottish Queen, and the author of a touching poem as well as a historical treatise in vindication of her character. "Never fear," replied Thackeray, "I can't afford to do it for the money."

What reminiscences Bell might have put upon paper of his literary life in Glasgow and Edinburgh! For thirty-five years he was a leading light in Glasgow in every literary, artistic, or dramatic movement, and it is illustrative of the scope of his friendships to quote a passage from his speech at the Scott centenary banquet in 1871 when, with an apology for the "personal vanity" of his confessions, he said:—

"I have handed the kettle to Joanna Baillie to replenish her teapot in her home at Hampstead; I have walked round the Calton Hill by moonlight with Mrs. Hemans;

* In connection with this dispute Mr. Richardson, an original member of the Athenæum, explains that it arose over the change of hall, the demand for tickets being so great that Thackeray found he had to lecture to 2000 persons in the City Hall instead of 450 in the Athenæum as per agreement. "He therefore naturally demurred at the original fee and claimed a higher one, and," Mr. Richardson adds, "I rather think he got it."

I not only frequently met but exchanged many letters with the captivating 'L.E.L.'* ; I have heard Moore sing some of his most exquisite songs ; Campbell has recited to me 'The Battle of Hohenlinden' ; I have listened many a time and oft to the Ettrick Shepherd warbling his wild, fresh, moorland ditties ; I have spent days and nights, both in town and country, with the most brilliant and delightful man who ever trod this earth — John Wilson ; and I was the means of first giving to the world an unpublished poem of Shelley, which he had left and forgotten in the hands of James Ballantyne of Edinburgh."

Truly Bell's literary rambles lay through pleasant places and in goodly company, and he might well have added Dickens and Thackeray to the list. To those who knew the author of "Vanity Fair" as a friend, he was a man of singular gentleness of character. "One loved him almost as one loves a woman," wrote Anthony Trollope, "tenderly and with thoughtfulness — thinking of him when away from him as a source of joy that cannot be analysed, but is full of comfort."

Talking of Trollope recalls the fact that he, too, was in and about Glasgow in his Civil Service days, spending some months in our neighbourhood as a postal surveyor during the winter of 1857-58. The occasion of his visit to Glasgow was an inquiry into the working of the Post Office with a view to perfecting

* Letitia Elizabeth Landon, the Poetess.

the system of delivering Her Majesty's mails. In his novel "The Three Clerks," Trollope drew largely upon his Glasgow and other postal experiences for the background of his story, and Charley Tudor actually was put through the identical examination that Anthony Trollope underwent when he first entered the secretary's office at St. Martin's-le-Grand.



In a little book called "The Queen's Head," Mr. Christie, a local *littérateur*, gives an interesting account of Trollope's visit to Glasgow, one or two of the older servants in the department distinctly remembering him as a "somewhat eccentric and country-looking gentleman, dressed in white nankeen trousers that fitted him very awkwardly, a black

surtout coat, and white hat." His arrival at the post office unannounced and unexpected was a little surprise—a clerk, who was unlocking the door to admit the Sunday staff about five o'clock in the afternoon, being accosted by a stranger who demanded, somewhat decisively: "Who are you?" "I—I'm Taylor," said the clerk. "And I'm Trollope," was the laconic rejoinder.

Another interesting visitor in the fifties was Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of that stirring novel of slave life, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." During her triumphant tour of Europe in 1853, she came to Glasgow and was the guest of a member of the Corporation. Her presence in the city seemed to cast a spell over the populace. Could this gentle woman of delicate appearance be the person who had awakened the whole civilised world to the horrors of slavery? Deputations of prominent citizens from Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Paisley, and Greenock thronged into the city to meet her, and, as one writer relates, "honest, whole-souled, sturdy



MRS. BEECHER STOWE.

men pressed her small hand within their great palms, and went away moved by her simple manners." In Glasgow she was presented with a penny anti-slavery offering that amounted to no less than £1000, and was the recipient of endless tokens of admiration during her stay. By all this demonstration of kindness Mrs. Stowe was greatly moved, and in her book of "Sunny Memories" she refers to her visit with gratitude and delight, describing her farewell

to Glasgow "overwhelmed with kindness to the last, and only oppressed by the thought of how little that was satisfactory we were able to give in return." Mrs. Stowe visited Europe several times after this, but had been long in retirement when she died.*

Charles Reade is another novelist who was in Glasgow a good deal about this time, and a touching



Charles Reade

little story is told by him of James Lambert, the heroic cotton-spinner, who saved more than eighty persons from drowning in the Clyde, and through his last rescue† brought on an illness which cost him his eyesight. Through a paragraph in a newspaper Reade first heard of this old blind man, who, even when his sight had failed him, hearing of an accident in the river, be-

sought the bystanders to lead him to the water that he might try to save another life, and bursting into

* Little more than a year ago, July 1st, 1896, Mrs. Stowe, a white-haired old lady of eighty-five, passed quietly away at her home in Hartford, Connecticut.

† In 1856, according to "St. Mungo's Bells," a book of Glasgow biographies.

tears and reproaching the people when he learned that the poor creature had perished. In connection with Reade's visits it may also be recalled that in his action for damages against the *Glasgow Herald* in 1876 some very interesting facts were brought out as to the earnings of the novelist. Dickens, it transpired, paid Reade £5 a-page for the publication of "Hard Cash" in *All the Year Round*, the author nevertheless retaining the copyright.

In 1858 Dickens again came to Glasgow on one of his interesting tours as a reader, and if the success of his whole theatrical company had broken the box-office record ten years before, his own success on this occasion was even more prodigious. He was accompanied by his two daughters, Mary and Kate, and "the dear girls enjoyed themselves immensely," he confided to Forster. Here is the novelist's own description of his reception in St. Mungo:—

"At Glasgow where I read three evenings and one morning, we took the prodigiously large sum of six hundred pounds! And this at the Manchester prices, which are lower than St. Martin's Hall. As to the effect—I wish you could have seen them after *Lilian* died in the *Chimes*, or when *Scrooge* woke in the *Carol* and talked to the boy outside the window. And at the end of *Dombey* yesterday afternoon, in the cold light of day, they all got up, after a short pause, gentle and simple, and thundered and waved their hats with such astonishing heartiness and fondness that, for the first time in all my

public career, they took me completely off my legs, and I saw the whole eighteen hundred of them reel to one side as if a shock from without had shaken the hall."

Taken all round, indeed, Scotland was infinitely more responsive to Dickens's genius in the rôle of reader than England was; for while in England £300 a-week was the average profit of this tour, he netted a weekly profit of £500 from his readings north of the Tweed. Similar readings were given in Glasgow in 1861, 1868, and finally in 1869.

It was on Thursday, 25th February, 1869, to a brilliant audience which packed the City Hall in every part that Dickens gave his last Glasgow readings. It was a pathetic farewell, for was now broken in health if not in spirits. His readings were those that had long exercised a spell over his hearers—"The Poor Traveller," Bill Sykes and Nancy from "Oliver Twist," and the inimitable "Bob Sawyer's Party." Who can resist the rich humour of that little gathering in Mrs. Raddle's first-floor front in Lant Street? The dispute about Bob's "little bill" and its disastrous consequences for the conviviality of the evening, compel our laughter. Just fancy Dickens himself reciting the break up:—

"Now, Mr. Sawyer!" screamed the shrill voice of Mrs. Raddle, "*are* them brutes going?"

"They're only looking for their hats, Mrs. Raddle," said Bob; "they are going directly."

"Going!" said Mrs. Raddle, thrusting her night-cap over the banisters just as Mr. Pickwick, followed by Mr. Tupman, emerged from the sitting-room. "Going! what did they ever come for?"

"My dear ma'am," remonstrated Mr. Pickwick, looking up.

"Get along with you, you old wretch!" replied Mrs. Raddle, hastily withdrawing her night-cap. "Old enough to be his grandfather, you willin! You're worse than any of 'em."

And with the merry laughter of that great audience ringing in his ears, Dickens passed out of Glasgow never to return again.



XVII.—A GROUP OF CELEBRITIES.

IT is remarkable how far back the older of Glasgow's modern men take us. Principal Caird, for instance, was born but eight years after Norman Macleod, seven after David Livingstone, and nine before Alexander Smith, the poet and essayist; while Lord Kelvin may easily enough remember the deaths of Scott, and Crabbe, and Coleridge. To give the actual dates, Principal Caird was born down in Greenock in 1820, and four years later the birth of the first little Lord Kelvin (christened plain, honest William Thomson) brought joy into the household of his father, then resident in Belfast as lecturer on mathematics to the Royal Academical Institute, but shortly afterwards transferred to Glasgow University.

Both of these modern celebrities were at the old

College together, and Norman Macleod was just finishing his course as they began. From the very first they appear to have had their plans prepared, and to have given themselves up to those studies which they have never forsaken during their long lives. Caird began with vigour that divinity course which brought him into the pulpit of Park Church in 1857, and which rapidly developed those oratorical powers and graces which make him one of the greatest preachers and orators of the day. Thomson passed from his early studies of chemistry and astronomy in Glasgow to mathematical distinction at Cambridge, and thence, at the age of twenty-two, to the Professorship of Natural Philosophy in his old *alma mater*, to which he has brought a lustre that cannot be dimmed, and a distinction in the world of science which Her Majesty some thirty years ago thought proper to crown with a knighthood, followed in the fulness of time by the higher honour of a peerage.

Going back to the college days of Caird and Thomson, a very interesting set of men will be found in the early stages of their career. Here, for instance, is Norman Macleod, a great figure in the College circle, full of boundless good-humour, active and athletic, and an earnest worker in every academic cause. If you read the annals of the time you will find him now whipping up the Peel Club to every

effort for the return, as Lord Rector, of Sir Robert Peel; again, glowing with enthusiasm for some missionary enterprise; and yet again, the king of good company, delighting his friends with that rich fund of anecdote and gift of story-telling which made his editorial connection with *Good Words* so agreeable a feature of that magazine. Great as he was as



a preacher, and famous as he made the old Barony Church to which he was called in 1851, he was not possessed of the fire of Principal Caird or the great power of utterance exercised by Dr. Chalmers. But Norman Macleod had a singularly attractive personality, and homely truths came swift and keen from his lips. He was a man of action rather than a man

of words, and he was too eager to say the right thing to think of fine phrases for its adornment. Yet he wrote some interesting books,* contributed largely to the delight of the readers of *Good Words*, and by his

* "The Starling," for instance, the idea of which was suggested to him by Peter Mackenzie.

great breadth of view and fearless, forcible speech in the pulpit he so endeared himself to the Queen as to become her favourite chaplain.

In the same College group which included Norman Macleod, John Caird, and William Thomson, was likewise a poor and struggling lad from Blantyre named David Livingstone. For long months before he had been saving up every farthing he could out of his meagre earnings in order to enable him to go to Glasgow University. He was nineteen when he gave up cotton-spinning, and came to College for the study of Greek, Divinity, and Medicine. At first he trudged these nine miles to and from Blantyre every day; but in mid-winter, when the snow lay thick upon the ground, he remained in Glasgow, living on oatmeal and sleeping in a humble little lodging which cost him half-a-crown a week. What trials this earnest lad endured through that long winter! Yet his condition was no worse than that of many a struggling youth in these days, and he had many genial and friendly classmates. One of his closest friends was James Young, then an eager student of chemistry, who applied his studies to the purification of petroleum with results that have made his name notable, and which then provoked Livingstone to ennoble him with the title of Sir Paraffin; while among the others were Dr. Grahame, afterwards Professor of Chemistry; Dr.

Andrew Buchanan of the Medical Faculty; and Sir Lyon Playfair.

But Livingstone's summons came speedily, and that missionary fervour, which had inspired Norman Macleod in his own student days, so possessed this young man that his call to South Africa came as a message from an enchanted land—a land rich in fields of enterprise for the man of action and the missionary. The rough, romantic, and adventurous but useful life he led in that strange, wild country has been described by many pens, but by none, perhaps, more vividly than his own in the plain, unvarnished tale of his wanderings. His home-comings in 1856 and 1864 were periods of great enthusiasm in Glasgow, where he was fêted and banqueted with every demonstration of affection. The local College of Physicians made him an "honorary fellow," and he was presented with the freedom of the city, an honour since conferred upon his friend and fellow-traveller, H. M. Stanley.

Those early days of Norman Macleod, Livingstone, and the rest were the days also of a pleasant youth whose lines were laid outside the College circle. Alexander Smith, the author of "A Life Drama" and many worthy poems, was then learning what he could at Neil Livingstone's school in John Street, previous to entering the warehouse of Alexander Buchanan & Co., Queen's Court, Queen Street. A warehouse was,

of course, just about the last place to which this tall, haggard youth ought to have been sent, but there he was, and there he remained scribbling down snatches of verse on any odd scraps of paper that lay near him in his leisure, and devouring Byron and Wordsworth, Scott and Fenimore Cooper, at every opportunity. Robert Foulis, the great printer and publisher, had done much the same thing as a youth in a barber's shop at the Cross, where he was employed with sponge and lather when Professor Hutcheson discovered him and set him up in his proper sphere.

No one, however, seems to have "discovered" Alexander Smith. He just went on scribbling

*David Livingstone*

his poetic fancies and living among his books, earning the nickname of "daft Sandy" from his fellow-workers, and presenting a rather depressing personal appearance, according to Rev. T. Brisbane, who knew him well. Smith, he says, was then "a long-limbed lad with large unfilled bones, rather ungainly in appearance and careless in dress, sallow in complexion, with

a somewhat sad expression of countenance from precocious thoughtfulness, and of a diffident disposition." One would scarcely think from this pen-portrait that Smith was the sort of person to fall a victim to the grand passion, yet he seems to have been almost as amorous a youth as Burns himself. He was always falling in love, and his verses are full of those personal episodes. A pretty girl in church or in the street was a sight that would bewitch him for days. Eventually, indeed, he married a certain Flora Macdonald—an actual descendant of the romantic original—and it was from the same family that Horatio MacCulloch claimed his bride.

When he transferred his services to John Robertson & Sons, Exchange Square, he seemed to find more congenial companionship, and falling into the company of some literary youths he started the Addisonian Society. It was a very small and very select set, but that mattered nothing. They met in Simeon's classroom in Frederick Street, off George Square, read elaborate essays to each other, and were supremely happy. To the local press, too, he began to contribute verses and the like, and in his room in Charlotte Street—the street where Thomas Campbell lived, where Professor Blackie was born, and where Dr. Chalmers set up house—he applied himself with great diligence to that "Life Drama" which, when

published in 1853, gave him at once a place among the poets of the time. Among his friends during his life in Glasgow were Professor Nichol, Dr Hedderwick, Hugh Macdonald, and the enthusiastic Gilfillan. Dr. Hedderwick tells in his "Backward Glances" the whole story of Smith's appointment in 1854 to the secretaryship of Edinburgh University, where he "continued to build up his poetical reputation, and to show himself, as in his 'Summer in Skye,' a master of lucid, imaginative, and beautiful prose." His best prose, however, is to be found in "Dreamthorp," a volume of delightful little essays, though it is upon his sonnets and city poems that his literary reputation must rest.



Mr. William Simpson, the artist of many of the illustrations which adorn old Glasgow books,* is another old citizen who is full of recollections of the city poet and the literary circle of his time, and in a series of interesting letters written a year or two ago to Mr. Robert M'Clure, the local antiquarian and bookseller, he presents a vivid picture

* Notably "Views and Notices of Glasgow in Former Times," published by Allan & Ferguson in the forties.

of the young group. Here, for instance, is a passage about a convivial gathering in connection with the Burns centenary in 1859 which has not been seen in print before:—

“There was one celebration in Glasgow at which Hugh Macdonald presided. It was a small gathering, and I think it took place in a house in the Candleriggs. Hugh occupied an old chair in which Burns had sat, and which had an arrangement whereby some part of the back could be folded forward and used as a desk. On this the poet had written some of his pieces. A grandson of the poet was also one of the party—a son of Mrs. Thomson, the daughter of Burns, who lived somewhere out by Crossmyloof or the 'Shaws. Alexander Smith was there out of compliment to Hugh, and I had the honour of being one of the company. Smith, too, made a speech, and it was longer than was expected from him, for he was not a speaker, but he afterwards confessed that he had written an article for a newspaper the day before on the centenary, and he had fired off all that he recollected of what had been given there! This reminds me that he did a good deal of writing for the daily Press.”

This curious little gathering, not hitherto chronicled, is quite characteristic of the author of a “A Life Drama.” He was diffident always, and avoided large companies, so that the two or three companions, met together in the Candleriggs, formed just that kind of set he delighted in. These were memorable days to Alexander Smith, and he loved—as few men have loved it—the old city where his young struggles were

begun and ended, where he "lost his head" over many a pretty girl, and where there seemed to him something musical even in the rumble of carts over the causeway, just as Campbell found the Glasgow streets more pleasing than the Highland hills, and R. L. Stevenson rejoiced in the street lamps of Edinburgh. Here is one of Smith's fanciful pictures of Glasgow towards sundown—

When sunset bathes thee in his gold,
In wreathes of bronze thy sides are rolled,
Thy smoke is dusky fire;
And, from the glory round thee poured,
A sunbeam like an angel's sword
Shivers upon a spire.
Thus have I watched thee, Terror! Dream!
While the blue Night crept up the stream.

And again, in more sombre colours—

All raptures of this mortal breath,
Solemnities of life and death,
Dwell in thy noise alone:
Of me thou hast become a part,
Some kindred with my human heart
Lives in thy streets of stone;
For we have been familiar more
Than galley slave and weary oar.

Smith knew all the lights and shadows of the city well. He had seen it in cloud and sunshine, in adversity and in success. But he always saw it with a kindly eye, and to the end its dull grey buildings and noisy streets were to him a joy and an inspiration, rich in memories which he would not willingly let die.



• XVIII.—MEMOIRS OF MODERN MEN.

FORTY years ago a group of earnest youths in Glasgow, then merely boys, made up their minds to be famous. One of them, David Gray, declared that the dream of his life would not be fulfilled, if his fame did not equal, at least, that of Wordsworth ; another, Robert Buchanan, wrote to Philip Hamerton—"I mean, after Tennyson's death, to be Poet-Laureate" ; like aspirations, if less openly expressed, fluttered into the day-dreams of William Black ; and infinite hopes, longings, and ambitions, crowded upon the view of Charles Gibbon as he sat,

far into the morning, in his little upstairs bedroom plying his busy pen over some snatches of romance with which he thought to astonish the whole novel-reading world.

All these youths were about the same age. Four decades ago David Gray was nineteen, Robert Buchanan and William Black in their sixteenth year, and Charles Gibbon about fourteen. What dreams for such boys, and how sanguine they all were! They stopped at nothing. The world might stand still if it cared, but their intellectual progress went on and on. Nights and days they spent reading books, planning great literary schemes, and writing amazing letters to celebrated authors in the hope that they might disclose their young genius to advantage in the high places of literature. Some of the letters they wrote were full of vanity, no doubt, but they were very sincere even in their self-assertion. One of Gray's to a notable writer did not fail in its mission for lack of assurance at least, for it contained the remarkable passage: "I am a poet—let that be understood distinctly"; and further, "I tell you that, if I live, my name and fame shall be second to few of any age, and to none of my own."

Robert Buchanan, however, in spite of his determination to succeed Tennyson as Laureate, was more modest in his correspondence, and confined

himself to sending huge MSS. to distinguished writers and demanding, as in one letter to George Henry Lewes, "Am I, or am I not, a poet?"

All this is very interesting to read, but one marvels at the unlimited assurance of these youths. Poets they all were in a measure, but Gray and Buchanan were the favourites of the Muse, and it was at a very early age that the author of "The Luggie" began to chant his sad, sweet music.



David Gray

Poor Gray! his life was a real tragedy. Somehow it seems to have been all wrong. Save by a few friends, who loved and cherished him to the very end, he was strangely misunderstood. It was never meant that he should be a school-master, and accordingly, when for a time he acted as pupil-teacher under

the late Matthew Aitken in Rutherglen School, he would return home to his lodging in the Calton, after the worry of a day's "schooling," nervous and agitated. His temperament was quite unsuited for the work. It was too delicate, too highly strung.

For a time he contributed fugitive verse to the *Weekly Citizen*, edited by Dr. Hedderwick, Mr.

William Freeland being then sub-editor. Both of these gentlemen—themselves men of genuine poetic and literary gifts—describe Gray as a tall youth, broad-shouldered, but otherwise slightly built, and with a stooping gait. Mr. Freeland remembers his face as “calm and beautiful, recalling the features of Shelley”; while Dr. Hedderwick gives a pleasant pen-portrait of the gifted boy: “His dark hair curled over a forehead of Keats-like formation, and I remember being struck with his delicate complexion, softly luminous eyes, and sensitive mouth.”

In Glasgow, Buchanan and Gray were fast friends, and the latter was a constant visitor to Buchanan's father's house, 9 Oakfield Terrace, Hillhead.* Their literary bent made this friendship mutually helpful, and while Gray penned his verses for the *Citizen*, Buchanan wrote in a desultory way for his father's paper, the *Sentinel*. “Friend Bob,” as Gray called him, was a Bohemian from the first, and a characteristic picture is sketched of him, as a youth in his father's newspaper office in Howard Street, lolling back in an easy-chair with a smoking cap on his head, and a long pipe in his mouth, taking the world good-naturedly, and leisurely thinking out his plots and verses. These were the days before he had counted, or even guessed, the cost of that pursuit of fame which

* See illustration on page 252.

enticed Gray and himself to London. For a time afterwards there were no smoking-caps or easy-chairs for Bob. In his delightful recollections of David Gray,* Buchanan tells how one day in May, 1860, he came to him and said with eyes full of hope and exultation—

“Bob, I’m off to London.”

“Have you funds?” Buchanan asked.

“Enough for one, not enough for two,” was the reply.

“If you can get the money anyhow, we’ll go together.”

So together they arranged to go, but somehow they missed each other on the evening of their departure, and, going by different railway lines, arrived in different parts of London, and each with the proverbial half-crown or so in his pocket, found himself homeless and alone in the great city. In order to save his few shillings for sterner purposes, Gray spent his first night in London under the stars in Hyde Park. At the moment it seemed very romantic, but how tragic it proved for the spirited lad is told with fine sympathy by Buchanan himself in the essay before referred to. Oh, those terrible days in that cheerless lodging in the Borough, whence he was rescued by “Friend Bob,” and borne up three flights

* “David Gray, and other Essays, chiefly on Poetry,” 1868.

of stairs to his own "dear old ghastly bankrupt garret" at 66 Stamford Street. Then, after many attentions at the hands of Monckton Milnes and Sydney Dobell, poor Gray was sent home to die. Buchanan came north to Glasgow to see him in April, 1861, and found the boy-poet calm and resigned. "I am dying, Bob," he said to his old friend, and alas! it was too true. Through the summer, however, he lingered, but the winter came, and with the close of the year he passed peacefully away.

William Black was another youth who went to London in pursuit of fame, but Black, in spite of his flirtations with the Muse, was of a more practical turn of mind than Buchanan or Gray, and a lad of great zeal in everything he turned his mind to. When in Glasgow he was enthusiastic in almost every kind of sport, and to his unwavering devotion to the gentle art of angling are due the glowing descriptions of salmon-fishing that distinguish his novels. He was born in the same year as Buchanan (1841), and first saw the light in a



high building in Trongate, just opposite the Tontine.* Schooling over, he soon took to scribbling verse, and from his boyhood was fond of pictorial description, always giving full sway to his panoramic imagination in his writings. Verse he could not resist, and when Dr. Hedderwick or Mr. Freeland declined his poems, he just wrote a descriptive article and ingeniously worked the verses in! He was a great worker, and as a journalist his industry was prodigious, so much so that when the little circle of ambitious Glasgow youths found themselves struggling together in London, Black, it is said, would be up with the muffin man, and have an article ready for the Press long before his mates were out of bed.

For a time, in Glasgow, Black attended the School of Art, but eventually gave up the idea of adopting painting as a profession. "I was a complete failure," he says with fine irony, "so qualified myself for a time in after life as an art critic." His first book was entitled "James Merle," and was described as an "autobiography," and he published it at his own risk, but it is to be feared that the copies sold might be

* In reply to a query of mine as to the number and flat of this house, Mr. William Black wrote: "I am sorry I cannot give you the number in the Trongate, but certain I am I was not born 'in the top flat.' That would have been altogether too poetic!"

reckoned on the fingers of both hands. Still it was a serious effort, and he went off to London with the consciousness that he was already a published author.

Charles Gibbon, the last of the four youthful adventurers, was more akin to Black than the others in bent and temperament. Yet Gibbon and Buchanan were very good friends, and the latter greatly encouraged Gibbon in his literary career. Charlie is described by his father (who is still a vigorous old man, and lives at Wood-end Cottage, Mount Vernon) as a bright, curly-haired boy, of somewhat girlish features, who was continually "pondering" over a book, or scribbling away his brains on paper. Both at Bellgrove Street, when his father was employed at Market Street grain mill, and later on when the family lived at the Olive Branch Tavern in Trongate on the old man turning publican, Charlie was to be found sitting up far into the night over his books and papers. Time after time his father interrupted these late sittings, knocking at the door of his boy's bedroom, and complaining, "Charlie! Charlie! are ye no' in yer bed yet? This is perfectly ridic'lous. I'm tellin' ye ye're jist killin' yersel'." Then Charlie would turn down the light and slip into bed, only to resume his book or his writing when the household was still, and finally fall asleep over some tale of mystery or imagination with the book in his hand.

Thus young Charles Gibbon spent his early days, and many of the plots of his novels were thought out in that little upstairs bedroom at the Olive Branch Tavern. For a time after leaving school he was employed in an apothecary's shop, as Smollett had been in the same neighbourhood more than a century before, and no doubt, like Smollett, he projected



Charles Gibbon

many of his customers into his books. The apothecary business, however, was by no means to his mind, and he speedily left it to enter the office of the doughty Peter Mackenzie, who was then editing and managing the *Reformer's Gazette*. This was his first start in journalism, and a very good start it was, for Gibbon had been there but a short

time when a notice of one of Charles Kean's performances at the Dunlop Street Theatre so attracted the actor, that he called at the *Reformer* office and asked to see the writer. When the curly-headed boy in his teens was presented to him as the dramatic critic, Kean was amazed, and to a shower of compliments he added a few guineas "which might get him some books," remarking that so capable a youth must come to distinction.

After a period of service under old Peter Mackenzie, young Gibbon went to Dumfries as a reporter, and ultimately, like his three fellow fortune-hunters, he found himself on the high road to London. In like manner with the rest, Gibbon endured the hardships of impecuniosity, for his half-crown (to arrive in London with more than half-a-crown seems to be considered discreditable !) could not last very long even reckoned by its equivalent in muffins, to say nothing of the irresistible temptation to squander it recklessly upon a rasher of bacon. Cold, cheerless lodgings in some two-pair back, with occasional dinnerless days and supperless nights, were the lot of Charles Gibbon in common with his companions.* For him, however, the lights of London never grew very dim, and if there were times when he feared that they might fail, there were times also when they flared up very brightly.

One of Gibbon's early efforts at authorship in the great Metropolis was a story called "The Rathboys ; or, Erin's Fair Daughter," which was dramatised by "Friend Bob," and actually saw the footlights at the

* "Neither Black nor Gibbon," Mr. Robert Buchanan wrote to me, "ever knew Gray. Gibbon came to London when Gray had gone home to die, and lodged with me at 66 Stamford Street, Blackfriars. We were sleeping together the night Gray died, and I woke Gibbon and said to him, 'David Gray is dead.' This was confirmed the second morning afterwards."

Standard Theatre, London, both Buchanan and Gibbon appearing in the cast.* From this onward the youths seem to have fared very well. Buchanan had much greater versatility than Gibbon, and poems, essays, novels, and plays were speedily called into existence by the talisman of his pen. Gibbon, however, confined himself to fiction, and the score of novels to which his name is attached went very near placing him among the foremost members of his craft. At his death seven years ago, an able writer in the *Athenæum* declared that "Auld Robin Gray" and "For Lack of Gold" displayed "that sympathetic insight which, in its highest development, was the secret of Scott's mastery of detail." And the same critic added this interesting comment, which is peculiarly appropriate to the Kailyairders of to-day:—

In these days, when fashion is doing so much to induce all sorts and conditions of writers to try their hands at something Scotch, one cannot help looking back with a certain amount of fond regret to one of the two or three masters of their native tongue who were also true exponents of the nature of their countrymen. Two or three are with us yet—perhaps five—but the circle is distinctly impoverished by the loss of Charles Gibbon.

* An interesting recollection mentioned by Gibbon's father is Charlie's appearance at Dunlop Street Theatre, Glasgow, as Meg Merrilees, in a performance of "Guy Mannering" for the benefit of the Macdonald family. This would be about 1862.

It was on the homely seaboard of East Anglia that he spent his closing days, and thence in his last illness he often looked back upon his fateful journey to London when he first left his old home. What a multitude of young provincials have trodden that same highway even since then! Many, no doubt, like Buchanan, Black, and Gibbon, have gone forth to distinction, and have seen the lights of London burn bright and luminous at their approach, but for how many, think ye, have these lights been extinguished for ever?



XIX.—A POET'S CORNER.

IN the midst of the great multitude of latter-day poets who have been associated with Glasgow, it is difficult to make a selection, yet impossible, without weariness, to deal with all. The swift and tragic end of David Gray robbed the company of Glasgow bards of a poet of great promise. Remember his own words: "I tell you that, if I live, my name and fame shall be second to few of any age, and to none of my own. I speak this because I *feel* power." This was extraordinary language for a boy, but Gray was no ordinary youth, and, had he lived, his poet-voice must have been heard among the best bards of the day. How sad, how woefully sad, was his end!

The day before his death (December 2, 1861), he had been brought the proof-sheets of his poem, "The Luggie," and his eyes had kindled with a beautiful light as he beheld the printed page. It was "good news," he said, though, alas! it seemed but a vanity to him now, and he passed tranquilly away in his old home, almost within hearing of the ripple of the Luggie, that sweet, sparkling stream among the trees which had first inspired his pen to poesy. It was but a short life that Gray lived, and it was full of pathos—pathos almost as deep as the tragedy of Chatterton or of Tannahill.

'Twas not a life,

'Twas but a piece of childhood thrown away,

was the beautiful epitaph he suggested for himself. Why were not these lines chiselled on his tombstone in the Auld Aisle Burial-ground at Merkland?

In the "Idyls and Legends of Inverburn," Robert Buchanan, Gray's friend and comrade, describes in "Poet Andrew" his young companion's sad life, from his childhood up, in verse which is powerful and moving. It is the boy's father who is made to speak of his son's poetry-making in Glasgow—

It puzzled us,

How a big lad, down-cheeked, almost a man,

Could pass his time in silly childish joys,

Until at last a hasty letter came

From Andrew, telling he had broke awa'

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From College, packed his things and taken train
To London city, where he hoped (he said)
To make both fortune and a noble fame
Through a grand poem, carried in his trunk.

Ye aiblins ken the rest. At first there came
Proud letters swiftly writ, telling how folk
Now roundly called him "Poet," holding out
Bright pictures, which we smiled at wearily—
As people smile at pictures in a book,
Untrue but bonnie. Then the letters ceased;
There came a silence cold and still as frost.

The story of that silence has already been told, but it introduces a poet whose name has been but slightly mentioned in these memoirs, the literary Dr. Charles Mackay. A good deal is told by Mackay in his "Forty Years' Recollections," of poor Gray's London struggles, for he was one of the first, it seems, to give the lad a helping hand. He introduced him to Thackeray, visited him in his illness at the Stamford Street garret, and generally showed an interest in the delicate youth who was "not a mere versifier, but one who possessed no small share of 'the vision and the faculty divine.'" It was appropriate that Mackay should help and encourage the young poet from Glasgow, for his own associations with the city were of a literary and journalistic character.* His "Forty Years' Recol-

* Mackay edited the Glasgow *Argus* for three years (1844-47), when Gray was only a boy at school.

lections" and that further retrospect, "Through the Long Day," are full of his doings in Glasgow, where he spent many pleasant evenings with Professor Nichol, the astronomer, and De Quincey, who was for a time Nichol's guest at the old College. It was after a night in the Professor's observatory that Mackay wrote his verses, "The Earth and the Stars," and an interesting account is given of the discussion which succeeded the reading of this effusion to the two worthies named. Almost an entire chapter of these "recollections" is given up to De Quincey's eccentricities in Glasgow, while fishing expeditions with Sir Daniel Macnee afford us glimpses of that distinguished Scottish painter—"one of the most amiable of men, a highly accomplished artist, a universal favourite in Glasgow society, and one of the best tellers of Highland stories, of which he had an inexhaustible budget, that ever set the table in a roar with innocent and exuberant mirth."

*Charles Mackay*

Mackay was one of the group of poets who sought

the literary lounge of David Robertson, and the beginnings of "Whistle Binkie" were within his experience ; while many a convivial hour was spent with Macready, Sir Archibald Alison, Sheriff Glassford Bell, and such celebrities as came to Glasgow. Mackay's life was a busy one, and "through the long day" he met nearly all the notable men of his time — Samuel Rogers, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, Dickens, Tom Hood, Thackeray, Jerrold, Ainsworth — a goodly company indeed.

To the Glasgow *Argus* he came with the expectation of finding greater leisure for his poetic work than the sub-editorial room of the London *Morning Chronicle* afforded. How far he realised that hope it is difficult to say, for the ways of the *Argus* were rough, and with all its hundred eyes it gave up the pursuit of success after three years, yielding its place to the *N.B. Daily Mail* in 1847. In his pleasant house on the Paisley Road—Rose Cottage, Ibrox Holm*—Mackay did, however, find leisure to write a good deal of verse, and the Muse of Ibrox Holm was not infrequently a charming, bright-eyed wench, all smiles and dimples, with a voice attuned to song. The degree of LL.D. was conferred on Mackay by Glasgow University, and during his three years in our midst he was an active figure in literary, dramatic, and artistic circles.

* See illustration on page 264.

In the same group with Mackay, Gray, and Robert Buchanan there were many poets of more or less merit about Glasgow—all very ambitious, and by no means modest of their talents. Andrew Park, for instance, could write a good song, and indeed one of his poems, "Silent Love," was illustrated by Sir Noël Paton. Park, however, was a fellow of great assurance, and used to rail in no measured terms at the mention of a new poem by Tennyson. "Tennyson!" he would exclaim. "Pshaw! I could reel off Tennyson by the yard."

Coming down to still later names, one modern poet, who made his home in Glasgow for fourteen years, but who now lives in retirement in Edinburgh, will be recalled—the Rev. Dr. Walter Smith. Dr. Smith is well remembered as from 1862 to 1876 the eloquent pastor of the Free Tron Church, whither he brought with him all those fresh poetic images garnered in the beautiful district of Orwell, on the banks of Lochleven. Into the pulpit he naturally carried the poetic faculty, and whatever his theme he invested it with a literary quality which soon thronged his church with young men eager to hear the poet-preacher of the Tron.

Dr. Smith was then, as he is now, a man of broad religious views, after the manner of Chalmers and Norman Macleod, William Anderson and John Ker; but all these Glasgow clergymen were men of literary

instinct, and prided themselves on imparting to their sermons something of the charm of literature. In this respect they were pioneers in their day, and one of them—Dr. Anderson, the famous minister of John Street U.P. Church—was, as a young man, actually brought before the Presbytery charged with quoting Shakespeare in his sermons! Well, that was over



DR. WALTER SMITH.

seventy years ago, and times have changed; but to these gifted preachers we owe, in a great measure, the literary form of the sermon of to-day. Dr. Smith, during his Glasgow pastorate, did much to encourage it, and in his leisure, which was not extensive, he found time to cultivate the muse to considerable purpose. Many graceful

verses were written in those hours snatched from the pastoral work of the Free Tron, and one of his best poetic fancies, "Olrìg Grange," was published by MacLehose at that period. "Hilda among the Broken Gods," written later, is doubtless his most ambitious work, and in this and "Raban" one critic declares he has done "more to broaden and humanise Scottish religion than all the writings of Professors Dods and Bruce."

The mention of MacLehose at once recalls the figure of the notable Glasgow bookseller, printer, and publisher. It is only twelve years since James MacLehose died, and he was then an active old man of seventy-four, ripe in recollections of old Glasgow and its celebrities. He well remembered David Livingstone, for on the future explorer coming in to College from Blantyre they had become firm friends. They were, of course, young men at that time, MacLehose being twenty-one, and Livingstone nineteen. It was with old George Gallie, the bookseller in Brunswick Street, that young MacLehose served his apprenticeship, and it used to be a standing joke among the youths of that day to come into his shop and ask for *Punch*, well knowing that the devout and godly man dealt chiefly in religious works, and viewed the London Charavari as a sort of official organ of the devil!

When MacLehose came to start business himself he joined Robert Nelson in partnership, but afterwards (in 1841) took over the whole concern, establishing at the same time in the compass of four little bookshelves his circulating library, which ultimately became one of the biggest in the kingdom, exceeding 20,000 volumes. Two of the most interesting books which he prepared for his own press were "Old Country Houses of the Old Glasgow Gentry"

and "One Hundred Glasgow Men," in the latter of which, pathetically enough, his own memoir appears, the famous old publisher passing away ere the second volume had gone into circulation.

Poets of whom a word or two must be said were Veitch and Nichol, the late professors in Glasgow University of Logic and English Literature. In spite of the subject in which he instructed the students, or perhaps by reason of it, Veitch was never happier than when rambling among the hills and dales of the Scottish Border, a land of song in which he often lived in imagination even in the midst of his busy life at the University. No man knew more about Border life and poetry than Veitch, and what he has not written or told of the subject is hardly worth knowing. His own poems breathe the very air of Borderland romance, and echo the music of its minstrelsy. Nichol was a poet of a different type, for he had not the fine imagination of Veitch, and his verses, beautiful in thought and graceful in expression, were addressed to the scholar rather than the lover of poetry.

William Freeland has made good his claims to figure among the bards of Glasgow, his verses showing a rich gift of poetic feeling as well as grace and charm of expression. "Pelagius" and the "Tragedy of a Nightingale" are among the best things he has done, but Mr. Freeland looks with particular pride upon

some few verses entitled "Reaping," which Princess Beatrice once distinguished by quoting them in an autograph album. The late Dr. Stoddart is another bard of whom mention may be made, for his "Village Life" revealed the poetic faculty in no small degree. The whole Ballad Club, indeed, made verse enough for a dozen articles, but here these memories of modern poets must be concluded.



XX.—GLASGOW IN MODERN FICTION.

IT is always a difficult matter to invest one's immediate surroundings with romance, for we are not all gifted with the temperament of Don Quixote; but the effort is at least a worthy one for the novelist, and though Glasgow may seem a rather unpromising subject for the writer of romance, it is astonishing how largely our big bustling city figures in modern fiction. Reference has already been made to local colouring in the novels of Smollett and Scott,

but these were written of old romantic days when Glasgow was situated in the midst of meadows and cornfields, and when the blast of the post-horn, the rumble of the stage-coach, and the roll of the drum at the Cross gave larger opportunities for the descriptive novelist.

To-day, however, our surroundings are different, but men of imagination still find little nooks and corners in which to locate the shadowy people of their inventive brains. Among living novelists, William Black, Bret Harte,* and J. M. Barrie have done not a little to illumine the dismal and sordid drama of the streets by the play of their fancy, so that in the midst of the crowded throng pushing and elbowing its way along Sauchiehall Street on a Saturday evening one may, in imagination, chance upon the romantic figure of Meenie Douglas from far-off Inver-Mudal, the desperate Heir of the M'Hulishes in search of the U.S. Consul, or even Gavin Dishart, the sombre lad who was ultimately to become the "little minister."

William Black, for instance, contrives to get his native city into every novel he writes, and in those in which Glasgow does not figure in some way it is very likely that his train of thought was diverted by

* The illustration over the heading of this chapter is from a sketch of the U.S. Consulate, where Bret Harte did much of his literary work in Glasgow.

his servant maid slamming the door adjoining his study just at the very moment when he was preparing his leading characters for a journey to St. Mungo. For Black is very sensitive to interruption during his literary work, and the announcement at a critical point that "dinner is served" is quite enough to drive his heroine into hysterics and his hero to drink, to the permanent injury of the whole novel. The very first story he ever wrote, "James Merle: An Autobiography," dealt largely with Glasgow, and in some respects may be considered a picture of his own life, not even excluding the romantic love affair of Jamie Merle for the fair Lilian Fraser. As a story it is rather amateurish (Black was twenty-three at the time of its publication), but its interesting and picturesque descriptions of older Glasgow are as vivid as anything of the kind he has done.

One can see at a glance that little lodging in Stockwell, with its flight of wooden steps outside, where Jamie lived with Gregory Smith, "the philosopher in top-boots" with the blue coat and silver buttons. Then there is Mrs. Wardrop, the pleasant little landlady who revered the Merles of the Secession, and took Jamie to the meeting-house, where the Secession Fathers preached, in Inkle Factory Lane. A lively picture, too, is that of Gregory Smith's Club which met in a tavern near the . . . ss, the only

test of eligibility for membership being an infinite capacity for drinking punch ; while the duel between Jamie and one of the members who had questioned a certain lady's honour has a dash of Smollett's fun about it which gives fine whimsicality to the scene. It is the convivial life of Glasgow that Black here paints, and he paints it with very lurid colours.

In "White Heather," again, he dwells to some extent on the same theme, but in transporting his two principal characters to Glasgow he casts a spell over their movements in the big city which creates a love interest far stronger than that which attached to their idyllic life at Inver-Mudal.

Ronald Strang, Lord Ailine's strong, manly, young gamekeeper, finds Glasgow a strange world indeed, and it is a strange life he leads away from the fine vigour that Ben Loyal, Ben Clebrig, and Loch Naver inspired, and, above all, the sweet tender influence of Love Meenie. The glimpses one gets of Glasgow homes are curiously interesting. We peep into the dolorous society of



his reverend brother's house in Abbotsford Place, see Ronald at his forestry class under the withered little Mr. Weems, and an animated picture is presented of the boisterous hospitality of the buxom young widow, Kate Menzies, with her champagne suppers in the back parlour of her flourishing tavern. Then we find Ronald in the company of the hearty big skipper (Captain M'Taggart), little old Mr. Japp, the musician, and the horsey Jimmy Laidlaw with whom the young keeper goes to the Harmony Club and very nearly to the devil!

There is a dash of romance in the little sprig of white heather which reaches Ronald from far-off Inver-Mudal, and causes him to halt in his mad career. It brings a light into the darkness of his life in that dingy lodging in Port-Dundas Road, and is the real beginning of his love dream, which, when Meenie comes to her sister's in Glasgow, is speedily realised. The reader follows with interest their many secret meetings, now at the corner of Sauchiehall Street and Renfield Street, again in Hill Street, Garnethill, until one fine day in Kelvingrove Park, seated under the trees, they settle the momentous question of all lovers to their own complete satisfaction. The secret wedding solemnised in the house of Rev. Mr. Mannering's two old maiden aunts in Rose Street is an interesting little function, and

Meenie, blushing and trembling and laughing all at once, was just the sort of bride to predestine that happiness which awaited them both when Ronald became the factor of Balnavrain.

Many of the local scenes pictured in "White Heather" are also to be found in "A Daughter of Heth," the best novel Black has ever written. One or two of its incidents are quite dramatic, the revelation of the mysterious woman at the Glasgow theatre as Lord Earlshope's wife being, in theatrical parlance, a "strong situation." Much of the romance of the story also lingers in and around the city. There is the love-making of The Whaup and Coquette, and their tender pledges at that trysting-place for lovers, the Pear-Tree Well; there is the merry evening at Lady Drum's dinner-party, and the joke against Bailie Maclaren, "a venerable person in spectacles"; and one recalls the diverting smoking concert at the Whaup's lodgings in George Street, when Coquette and Sir Peter Drum descended upon that rollicking young man and his college chums in the midst of their conviviality. These scenes show how William Black has entered into the romance of Glasgow life, and many a time has he seen it with the love-lit eyes of his hero when "for him Glasgow was no longer a somewhat commonplace and matter-of-fact mass of houses, but a realm of mystery and dreams which love had lit up with the coloured lime-light of wonder and hope."

Bret Harte is another author who has employed his pen to illumine the sombre stone walls of Glasgow, and his five years of office in the city (1880-85) as United States Consul make him a literary figure of very pleasant memory. Much of



his literary work was done at the Consulate, 107 West George Street, and his old friend Mr. William Gibson, the Vice-Consul, tells many delightful reminiscences of his former chief, touching his kindly disposition, gentleness of bearing, and daintiness of dress. "He is one of the kindest and most amiable of men," says Mr. Gibson, "and his objection to appearing much in public, especially at 'functions,' is due solely to his distaste for pageantry. He is eminently a literary man, with a literary man's love of retreat, and parading in public unnerves him." *

* At the *Glasgow Herald* centenary banquet in 1882, he was down to propose the toast of the Press, but at the last moment he excused himself from the duty by writing that "after spending a week or two studying the U.S. Constitution in order to find out whether he might attend such a gathering, and considering the importance of the toast, he had prepared a speech which would take at least five hours to deliver." This threat fully exonerated him, and a substitute was found.

While in Glasgow Bret Harte lived chiefly in a suite of rooms at the Grand Hotel, and here he doubtless wrote the greater portion of "Flip and Found at Blazing Star," "In the Carquinez Woods," "On the Frontier," "By Shore and Sedge," and "Maruja." He had an excellent gift of story-telling, and the knack of stating the point in a couple of neat sentences. He was full of stories of California—tales of rough people like Stumpy, Kentuck, Man-o'-War Jack, and Cherokee Sal in "The Luck of Roaring Camp." He even pictures some of his Californian characters in Glasgow, for in "The Heir of the M'Hulishes" he describes the descent upon the Consulate by Malcolm, the claimant to the M'Hulish estates in the Highlands, and the violent Harry Custer from California, both determined upon the desperate enterprise of raising a revolt of the clans to establish the M'Hulish in his own. The Consulate of St. Kentigern, where this exciting interview took place, is referred to as a "gloomy old office, with lustreless windows, a shelf of fog-bound admiralty law-books, one or two coloured prints of ocean steamships under full steam, bow on, tremendously fore-shortened, and seeming to force themselves through shadowy partitions; and engravings of Lincoln and Washington as unsubstantial and shadowy as the dead themselves." This is a

tolerably accurate picture of Bret Harte's room at the Consulate, and it was here that he was able to persuade Malcolm M'Hulish and Harry Custer of the fruitlessness of their attempt to set the heather on fire, Custer himself admitting that he had had about enough of this country after one night in Glasgow at Sir James M'Feu's.

"Jack," said the Californian rough, "I've painted the town red myself, and I thought I knew what a first-class jamboree was, but they were prayer-meetings to that show! Everybody was blind drunk—but they all got over it except *him* [the last of the M'Hulishes.] *They* were a different lot of men the next day, as cool and as cautious as you please, but *he* was shut up for a week and came out crazy."

Poor M'Hulish! his camp life and hard drinking in the Far West were but a pic-nic to a Glasgow dinner-party. Here indeed is Bret Harte's explanation of why he avoided public dinners.

The M'Hulishes, however, did not monopolise the attentions of the Consul. In his latest book ("The Bell Ringer of Angel's") there is a romantic little story of Glasgow life with the title "Young Robin Gray," the said young gentleman being a millionaire friend of the narrator's who falls in love with Ailsa Callender, the daughter of an old optician and mathematical instrument-maker whose shop, with its "dimly-lighted windows, displayed the pathetic

reinforcement of a few watches, cheap jewellery on cards, and several cairngorm brooches and pins set in silver." Both Ailsa and her father are vigorously drawn characters, and Ailsa's little rebellion at the Consulate in favour of young Robin, whom she praises loudly and hysterically, and to whom she concludes by sending a letter and a kiss into the bargain, causes quite a stir in the official apartment, "the portraits of Lincoln and Washington rattling uneasily in their frames."

These glimpses of romance at the Consulate are in no way exaggerated, for Bret Harte had many curious callers, and no end of applications for advice and assistance in schemes quite as whimsical as the restoration to the M'Hulishes of their Highland home.

A writer of a very different type, who has also brought Glasgow scenes into his pages, is J. M. Barrie. It was in a humble single apartment in a poor quarter of the city that Gavin Dishart and his widowed mother in "The Little Minister" lived for seventeen long years. Barrie does not describe the locality, but that little room is quite familiar to us, and we can see Gavin growing up at school much like other boys, telling Margaret that he "would rather be good at high jump than the author of 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'" The "Black Year"

presents them amid great privations, Margaret denying herself food to send Gavin to college, and he in turn buying his mother a feather pillow with his first bursary money. How the pair loved each other! The first day that Gavin put on his clericals, like Mr. Trail, and went out into the streets in all his grandeur, Margaret sat down and cried for an hour ;

and here is a characteristic sketch of their last days in the big city after Gavin's call to Thrums :—



"Gavin, Gavin," Margaret said many times in those last days at Glasgow, "to think it has all come true!"

"Let the last word you say in the house be a prayer of thankfulness," she whispered to him when they were taking a final glance at the old home.

In the bare room they called the house the little minister and his mother went on their knees, but, as it chanced, their last word was not addressed to God.

"Gavin," Margaret whispered as he took her arm, "do you think this bonnet sets me?"

So that Margaret with all her piety was very worldly after all on that day they left for Thrums. It was very natural, however, and very womanly, and there

was some excuse for her vanity in her son who had now realised her greatest ambition, and was taking her to the manse itself. Thus out of Glasgow they passed into the life of the Auld Lichts of Thrums, and the tender mercies of Snecky Hobart, Tammas Haggart, and Chirsty.

Still another novelist who mentions Glasgow in her books is the late Mrs. Oliphant, but many more might be quoted if there were need to multiply examples. Enough has been said to indicate Glasgow's place in modern fiction, and, for the rest, I am content to hope these reminiscences have shown that our mercantile capital is not destitute of literary associations, which give a city dominion in the heart of the scholar, and a warm place in the affections of all who cultivate the love of letters.



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